

U.N. members urge Israeli gesture on NPT

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The United States, France and Britain are quietly pressuring Israel to make a goodwill gesture on nuclear non-proliferation ahead of an international conference, diplomats said Wednesday. Washington and its European allies, concerned about Egyptian hesitation on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), have recently held talks with Israel, the sources said. Delegates from U.N. member states that have signed the treaty are laying the groundwork for the April 17 to May 12 talks here on the extension of the 25-year-old nuclear NPT. The extension now appears uncertain due to conditions posed by countries like Egypt, Mexico, Iran, Indonesia and Nigeria. While no one is expecting Israel to sign the treaty in the coming months, "making a gesture could allow Cairo to save face and sign the NPT extension," said one U.N. source. Israel could announce that it would open some of its nuclear installations to inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency as one measure to build confidence, sources said.

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King congratulates president of India

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday sent a cable to Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on India's Republic Day. King Hussein wished Mr. Sharma good health and happiness and the Indian people further progress and prosperity.

Jordan opposition wants coordination with Syria

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Jordanian groups opposed to the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel called for increased contacts with Damascus to "foil schemes aimed at weakening the Arabs." Syria's state-run agency SANA reported. Twelve delegates from seven leftist and Arab nationalist parties arrived here Tuesday on the first visit by a Jordanian opposition delegation to be announced publicly here. They "battled Syria for defending the interests of the Arab Nation and preserving its dignity" during the meetings with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam and ruling Baath Party Deputy Secretary General Abdullah Ahmad. They expressed "support for the policy followed by Syria" and called for increasing contacts with the Baath to "coordinate efforts to foil schemes aimed at weakening the Arabs by imposing solutions favourable to Israel," SANA added. The delegation was invited by the National Progressive Front, the Baath party-led coalition ruling Syria.

Tantawi ready to visit Jerusalem

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's mufti, the spiritual leader of the Sunni Muslims, said Wednesday he would accept an Israeli invitation to visit Jerusalem, despite an Arab boycott of official contacts with the city's Israeli occupation authorities. Sheikh Mohammed Sayeed Tantawi said: "I will welcome any Israeli invitation to visit Jerusalem, since openness and face-to-face contacts are the best ways to gain our rights." The mufti told the weekly Al-Mussawwar he had not received such an invitation, but he believed in the approach of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat "who visited his enemy, going there in a position of strength and not weakness."

FIS leader backs opposition plan

PARIS (R) — A detained Algerian Muslim fundamentalist leader has backed an opposition plan to end three years of bloody civil strife while pledging to keep up the fight against the government. In a letter smuggled to the French daily Liberation from house arrest in Algeria and published on Wednesday, Ali Belhadj said the so-called Rome platform provided for "a just and legitimate solution of the crisis." The plan, calling for talks on a transitional government leading to democratic elections, was drawn up in Rome earlier this month by Algerian opposition parties that won nearly 85 per cent of the vote in an aborted general election, including Mr. Belhadj's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Moghrabi to succeed Abourezk at ADC

AMMAN (J.T.) — After 15 years as chairman of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), former Senator James Abourezk has stepped down due to heavy scheduling demands in his South Dakota law practice. Mr. Abourezk will remain closely tied to ADC and will be honoured at ADC's annual convention.

Government presents policy statement

Sharif Zeid pledges democracy, cooperation with legislature, reforms in all areas, better Arab ties and consolidation of peace

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Wednesday asked for a vote of confidence from the Lower House of Parliament on the basis of a policy statement that pledged continued commitment to democracy, cooperation with the legislature, more efforts to achieve political, social, administrative and economic reform, pursuit of better Arab ties and consolidation

of the peace treaty with Israel.

The statement, which was read out to the House by Sharif Zeid, also stressed the depth of Jordanian-Palestinian relations and the Kingdom's support for the Palestinian people and their sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). "As we approach the House with this policy statement, on whose bases we ask for the confidence, we stress

our commitment to exert maximum effort for complete cooperation with the legislative authority so as to consolidate... parliamentary life... in a manner that guarantees the separation of authorities... within the guidelines of the Constitution," Sharif Zeid told lawmakers.

The prime minister said the government remains committed to democracy which is based on political pluralism, respect for personal and public freedoms and sovereignty of the law with the Constitution and the National Charter guiding its work.

"My government will work to continue the building of the democratic model which will be able to respond to the requirements of our people and nation," Sharif Zeid said in the policy statement, which the House will begin debating Saturday.

He said the government will maintain dialogue over public issues with political parties in consolidation of the democratic process, adding that the government will soon present the House with a draft law on a centre for freedom, democracy and human rights studies and will reconsider the Election Law and the laws of public meetings and the prevention of crime with the purpose of modernising them to correspond with the democratic life.

Dialogue with professional and labour unions, chambers of commerce and industry and others will be permanent feature of the government's policy, Sharif Zeid said in his hour-long speech.

"The democratic process is irreversible," the prime minister pledged.

Sharif Zeid said he presented his policy statement to the House at a time when His Majesty King Hussein wanted positive change on

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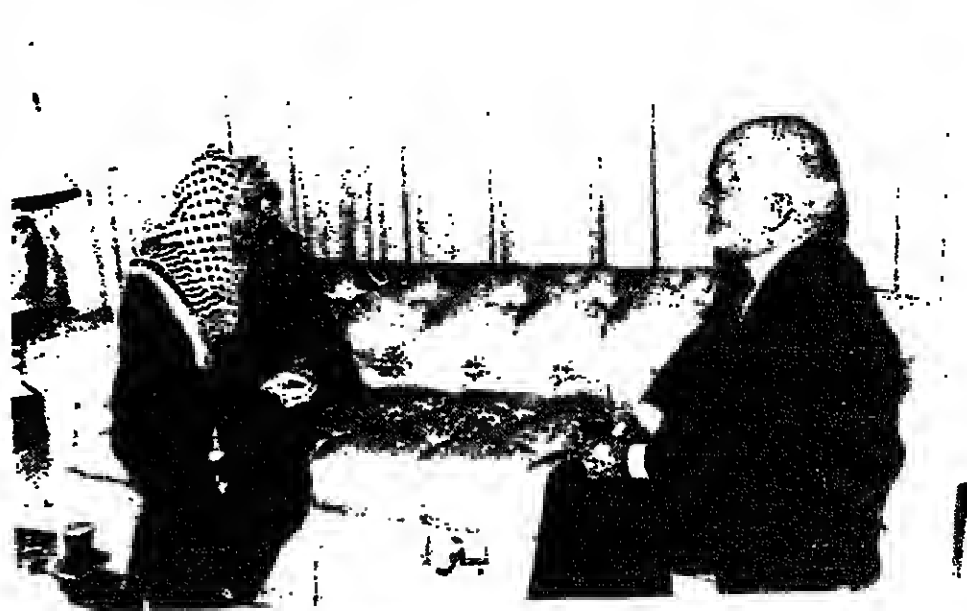
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His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday meets with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (Petra photo)

King, Arafat discuss Jordanian-Palestinian ties

King reaffirms support for Palestinian quest and stand on Jerusalem shrines

By Ghadeer Taher
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat began talks Wednesday on future Jordanian-Palestinian relations with Jerusalem expected to be high on the agenda since the two sides have already reached agreements on most other issues of cooperation. The King and Mr. Arafat, head of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) based in Gaza and Jericho, held an initial round of talks "on issue of mutual concern" at the Guest Palace shortly after the PLO chairman flew in aboard an executive jet sent

(Continued on Weekender Page C)

Jordan hopes Arafat visit will cement bilateral ties

Kabariti deplors Tel Aviv blast

By Salameh Ne'matt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Wednesday that the visit by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat will help lay solid foundations for institutionalising Jordanian-Palestinian relations in the future. Speaking following Mr. Arafat's arrival on his first visit since May last year, Mr. Kabariti said it was "no longer acceptable for Jordanian-Palestinian relations to keep

going back to square one whenever there are differences." He explained that the signing of a memorandum of understanding and cooperation between the two sides is "the first concrete step towards institutionalising our relations."

Commenting on Sunday's suicide bombing which killed 19 Israelis near Tel Aviv, and Israel's plans Tuesday to build a border to separate Israelis and Palestinians, Mr. (Continued on Weekender Page C)

Israel, PLO praise U.S. move; target groups say they have no funds

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) lauded U.S. President Bill Clinton on Wednesday for his crackdown on hardline groups threatening Middle East peace but regretted that it was "too little, too late."

In Gaza City, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat described the freezing of assets of organisations accused of trying to destroy the Middle East peace process as a "positive step."

But it was "late and insufficient," said Mr. Arafat's spokesman Marwan Kanafani.

"These groups get money which they misuse. Many people give funds for charity or religion or health (projects) but this has been abused to oppose the peace process."

A senior Israeli foreign ministry official said: "We are pleased, but it's too little and too late."

Israel warned in early 1993 that the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) was financed by a leadership in the United States and Britain. Branches had also been set up in Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan and Syria, it said.

Security forces arrested three Palestinians with U.S. citizenships on January 31, 1993 and charged them with financing Hamas from the United States. One was subsequently jailed and the

others released. "Islamic fundamentalism has to be fought with the appropriate means," government spokesman Uri Dromi said. "I hope the United States is convinced of that and will continue what it has started."

Experts estimated the total value of contributions to the 12 groups annually in U.S. territory to be at least \$200 million.

Yonah Alexander with George Washington University said that the money, either in the form of financial gifts or property or equipment, comes from both communities and private citizens.

"It is at the very least around \$200 million," said Mr. Alexander.

The administration has targeted groups including Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hizbollah, the Palestine Liberation Front, and Kach, an extremist Jewish group.

It has not, however, given an estimate of the assets to be frozen.

Hardline groups targeted by Mr. Clinton said that the U.S. decision to freeze their assets will not stop the violence.

Most groups cited by Mr. Clinton said they had no assets in the United States and were thus not affected by the crackdown against 12 groups and 18 individuals, including the extremist Jewish Kach movement.

Mr. Clinton imposed the

sanctions after saying that militant Arab factions had disrupted the peace process by killing 52 Israelis in the last four months.

Announcing the measure to Congress on Tuesday, Mr. Clinton also prohibited contributions to the groups from the United States.

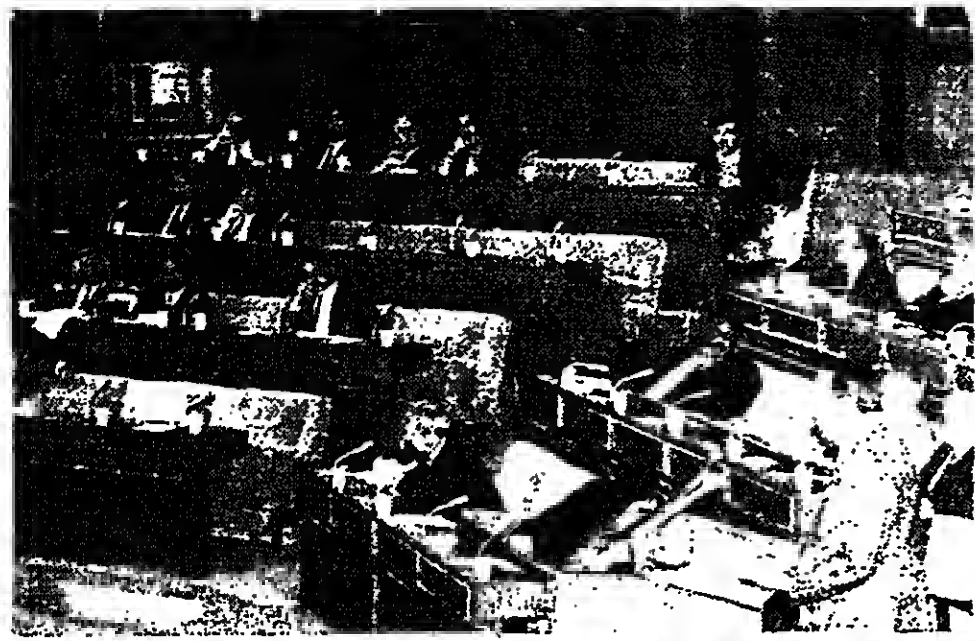
Baruch Marzel of Kach said his group also would not be greatly inconvenienced, since its activists in the United States were tipped off three weeks ago about the planned freeze and cleared out most of their bank accounts.

"We prepared, and the damage is very small, a few thousand dollars. They couldn't freeze something they couldn't find," said Mr. Marzel, speaking from his home in a Jewish enclave in the West Bank town of Hebron.

A spokesman for Hamas, the militant group responsible for much of the recent bloodletting, said Mr. Clinton is "deluding himself if he thinks that his action will pressure Hamas or restrict its activities."

"Hamas' confrontation with the enemy will not be affected by these measures and its operations against Israel will continue," spokesman Imad Falonji said in Gaza City.

The group is the PLO's most powerful political rival.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Wednesday delivers the government's policy statement at the Lower House of Parliament (Photo by Yousef Al Allan)

Israel tightens its grip on Jerusalem with more colonies

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Israeli government gave the go ahead Wednesday for 3,000 more homes for Jewish settlers around Jerusalem on the occupied West Bank, thereby tightening Israel's grip on the Holy City.

A ministerial committee, chaired by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as a control mechanism over colonisation, approved plans to build in the three major settlements, north, south and east of Jerusalem.

Some 800 units — already sold — will go up this year at Maale Adumin, another 500 houses can be sold now and 580 next year, the committee said.

It did not specify when the last two projects would be built.

The only change the committee made to the original housing ministry plan for the private projects was to delay the sale of the 580 units until 1996.

The committee also approved the building this year of 1,026 houses at Betar, near Bethlehem, which have already been sold. Another 900 homes were slated for

Jerusalem.

The decision was in line with a secret cabinet initiative of January 1993 to support settlement for another 20,000 Jews in a 10-kilometre radius around Jerusalem.

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Jerusalem.

Israeli, 3 fighters killed in S. Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — An Israeli soldier was killed and two were wounded on Wednesday in heavy fighting in South Lebanon in which three guerrillas died, Lebanese and Israeli reports said.

Fighting erupted shortly after midnight and raged until mid-morning, a spokesman for the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL said.

The Israeli army said a soldier shelling guerrillas from an outpost in Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone was killed at 1 a.m. (2300 GMT on Tuesday) when a mortar bomb blew up inside its barrel.

Security sources at Marjayoun, headquarters in the 15-kilometre wide border zone of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA), said three guerrillas were killed and two Israeli soldiers were wounded in later fighting.

The sources earlier said six guerrillas were killed. An Israeli army spokesman also put the casualties at three guerrillas killed and two Israeli soldiers wounded.

The 7:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) firefight, which sparked air attacks and artillery duels, erupted near the village of Beit Leef in the western sector of the Israeli-held "security zone," the sources said.

The Lebanese sources said guerrilla infiltrators raked a mechanised Israeli patrol with machine gun fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

The Israelis fought back with tanks and automatic weapons fire. Two helicopter gunships later rocketed and strafed infiltration trails in a ravine near the ambush scene, the sources added.

Later Wednesday, guerrillas fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns at a blimp Israeli stronghold near Talousa on the edge of the "security zone."

Israeli artillery retaliated by firing about 50 shells at suspected guerrilla hideouts in an hour-long bombardment.

Ghali: No Iraqi move on oil

GENEVA (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said on Wednesday that Iraq had made no move towards limited oil sales despite an indication from Baghdad that it was willing to discuss such a move.

According to Iraqi press reports, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said in Baghdad last weekend that Iraq was ready to resume talks on exporting a limited quantity of oil for the purchase of food and humanitarian supplies.

Sanctions-hit Iraq would be authorised to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil under Security Council resolutions that would earmark 30 per cent of the proceeds, mostly for compensation payments to the victims of the Gulf war.

Asked about Mr. Aziz's comment, Dr. Ghali told reporters: "I have not received any official demand from the government of Baghdad dealing with the subject."

Dr. Ghali was also asked whether he saw any flexibility in Security Council resolutions 706 and 712 of 1991, which dictate the terms of Iraqi one-off oil sales. Iraq has rejected the resolutions as violating its sovereignty.

He replied that he was bound by the resolutions and added: "Even if we found a way of softening the rules of the game, this still has to be approved by the Security Council."

He added: "Even if I find an agreement for a partial lifting of sanctions with the government of Baghdad, it would still need the approval of the Security Council and the Security Council may refuse my agreements..."

In Doha, Qatar, Spanish Defence Minister Julian Garcia Vargas said Wednesday he was in favour of maintaining the embargo on Iraq to make Baghdad comply with all U.N. Gulf war resolutions.

"Lifting the embargo is linked to the application by

Iraq of all the resolutions" taken by the Security Council after Baghdad invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Mr. Vargas, in Qatar on the last leg of an official tour of the Gulf, told the official agency QNA that Spain "fully respects the embargo."

Businessmen from 38 Italian companies are expected here in Iraq Friday for a four-day visit focusing on future cooperation and supplying Iraq with food and medicine, Iraqi officials said.

The delegation will be headed by the Arab-Italian Chamber of Commerce president, Sergio Marini.

"The visit is very important as Iraq is on the verge of getting rid of the U.N. embargo," the head of the Iraqi Federation of Industries Adnan Al Kadass told AFP.

Diplomats said meanwhile Iraq, awash with oil as a result of the sanctions, is offering diesel at giveaway prices to lure Turkish truckers carrying vital flour and sugar.

Israeli ministers want to fence Palestinians in

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's answer to a wave of suicide bombings inside its territory could be electronic security fences creating new border lines for the occupied West Bank.

"This type of line, together with soldiers in the field and patrols along its length, should be effective," Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said on Tuesday, calling for a permanent separation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Police Minister Moshe Shaleh told army radio that a fence would probably be necessary in the heavily populated central border area between Israel and the West Bank. Police patrols and guard dogs could oversee other sections.

Suicide bombers from the Palestinian-led Gaza Strip killed 13 Israeli soldiers and a civilian in central Israel on Sunday, touching off a national debate on security.

Touch-sensitive barriers are already in place along Israel's frontiers with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Gaza Strip.

The army said only a small section of the Gaza border area, from the Erez checkpoint in the north to the Mediterranean several kilometres away, has yet to be fenced off. Soldiers prevented a Reuters photographer on Tuesday from taking pictures in the unfinished area.

A dirt patrol road, swept and later checked carefully for footprints runs along the Israeli side of the chain-link and barbed-wire fences, which are about three metres high.

The Israeli army relies on the high-technology and mobile patrols from scattered outposts along the borders. With the exception of border crossings there are few watchtowers and searchlights reminiscent of the former iron curtain.

Sensors indicating the fences have been disturbed bring Israeli army patrols to the scene to intercept infiltrators.

Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth's London home, is widely reported to be protected by an Israeli-made electronic fence.

But the high technology, including motion-detecting ground radar, sometimes backfires.

Last year guerrillas in southern Gaza placed a ladder on the electronic fence marking the Israeli-patrolled border with Egypt. They waited in ambush and opened fire on the soldiers, killing an officer.

Scattered roadblocks currently separate the occupied West Bank from the Jewish state. The border — a line on an unfinished political map — is porous.

Under Israel's 1993 peace deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Israeli troops are obliged to pull out of Arab population centres in the West Bank before Palestinian elections, delayed since July, are held.

That, and the close proximity of Arab towns and villages, not only to Jewish settlements in the West Bank but also to communities just inside Israel, has security chiefs worried.

A string of Israeli villages near the West Bank recently had their "security rating" upgraded, meaning they now qualify for money to build perimeter fences and patrol roads, municipal officials said.

Palestinians without Israeli work permits often take a walking detour into the countryside to sneak inside Israel, where Jewish contractors wait in their cars to ferry them to building sites.

Separation was the main theme of Mr. Rabin's address to the nation on Monday night.

Mr. Rabin said on Tuesday: "We must get ready by preparing a programme which will surely take a month or two to prepare... I don't want to go into technical details. A fence throughout is not a must."

"The fence will be for security, of course," Mr. Sarid told army radio. "But it will also be a demographic fence to divide us from them."

Nabil Shaath, a senior adviser to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, said in Gaza that separation was only acceptable as part of the creation of a Palestinian state, an idea which Israel officially opposes.

"In which case, you can have separation if you want to close borders when you want to — with some mutual-ity and equality," Dr. Shaath told reporters.

Separation now, Dr. Shaath said, "really means closure, which means siege and prison to the Palestinians."

Police Minister Shaleh said he was prepared to deploy border guards and dogs on a demarcation line within eight months of a decision to implement a separation.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres voiced support for the idea, telling Israeli Radio it "definitely appeals to me."

Mr. Rabin said he would establish a committee to draft proposals for separating the two populations.

"We want to achieve a separation between you and us," Mr. Rabin said, calling it a means of protecting Israelis — "98 per cent of whom live within Israel proper" — from guerrilla attack.

After Sunday's bombing, claimed by the militant Islamic Jihad group, the cabinet tightened a closure of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, preventing tens of thousands of Palestinians from reaching their jobs in Israel.

Israeli media reports speculated the border fence would keep Jewish settlements around Jerusalem outside Palestinian-ruled territory pending a final peace settlement.

Palestinians are furious at recent Israeli construction at settlements in occupied land near Jerusalem, which Israel views as its "undivided and eternal capital." Palestinians regard Arab East Jerusalem as capital of their own future state.

Unions condemn Egyptian arrests

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian union on Wednesday condemned the arrest of dozens of labour leaders and mainstream Muslim activists, accused by the government of supporting Islamic militants.

Egypt's president warned the opposition to ease its criticism.

In a nationally televised speech, President Hosni Mubarak defended the government's handling of the three-year Islamic insurgency that has left more than 550 people dead. He described extremists' attacks on security forces as a "rabid campaign."

Human rights groups and opposition parties in recent months have objected to government tactics in dealing with Islamic militants, including mass arrests, curfews and house demolitions.

The confrontation has been fiercest in southern Egypt.

Mr. Mubarak also warned opposition groups to stay in line.

"The honest opposition criticises and advises, but it does not fabricate and instigate," Mr. Mubarak said. "It is committed to the limits of legitimacy and does not cross them."

Referring to the arrests of government opponents, Mr. Mubarak said he was upset that "some elements, who we know are committed to democracy and realise the danger to the nation from these (extremist) groups, are participating in this unfair campaign."

The government, sensitive to criticism by Islamic groups, has cracked down hard on the opposition, arresting a well-known Islamic writer in December and

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran, Pakistan plan anti-drugs campaign

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran and its eastern neighbour, Pakistan, are to launch a three-year campaign against drug smuggling across their common border, Tehran Radio reported. Quoting an unidentified official of Iran's anti-narcotics agency, it said the two countries had signed an agreement to this effect after three days of talks held under U.N. auspices in Tehran. The officials said Iran and Pakistan will strengthen their security forces along their frontier, carry out joint operations against narcotics smugglers, and build an initial 42 border posts along smuggling routes with more to follow later. The radio, monitored in Nicosia, quoted the official as saying Iran intends to begin anti-drugs cooperation with the Central Asian republics in the future, but gave no details. Tehran already has an anti-narcotics agreement with neighbouring Turkey. The main narcotics routes into Iran are from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Carbon monoxide kills couple in Cyprus

NICOSIA (AP) — A British couple died of carbon monoxide poisoning in a tourist apartment in the north-western village of Latsi on this Mediterranean island, police reported. The statement did not identify the couple pending notification of their next of kin in Britain. It said a 38-year-old man and his 36-year-old wife were found dead in their flat early Tuesday. Police coroner Marius Matsakis said their bedroom apparently filled with carbon monoxide from a charcoal fire the couple had apparently lit during the night. The statement said the couple had arrived in Cyprus five days ago from Saudi Arabia, where they had been living, and had rented the apartment until a holiday home they were building at Latsi was completed.

Relief groups pull backs due to Sudan fighting

NAIROBI (R) — Fighting between Sudanese government forces and southern rebels near the border town of Nimule has intensified in the past week, forcing relief agencies to relocate to north Uganda, the U.N. said on Tuesday. The U.N. Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) said in a statement that relief agencies temporarily moved some staff from Nimule, on the border between Sudan and Uganda, by road on Tuesday. "Some agencies, including Catholic Relief Services and (Catholic) Diocese of Torit will leave skeleton staff in Nimule to continue relief activities pending further developments," OLS said. It said the decision to scale back was taken in Nimule on Tuesday following shelling in the village centre on Monday night which killed two civilians. "Since Jan. 15, there have been several reports of shelling in the Nimule area, including some near the hospital and airstrip. The village is currently held by the SPLA (Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army)," OLS said. It said the relocation had disrupted a meningitis vaccination campaign.

Russian bombing kills four, Kabul says

ISLAMABAD (R) — Russian jets based in the Central Asian Republic of Tajikistan bombed a northern Afghan border village, killing four people and wounding nine others, the official Kabul Radio said on Tuesday. Monday's raids on Maymay village in Badakhshan province's Darwaz district also destroyed five houses, said the broadcast monitored in Islamabad. Badakhshan borders with Tajikistan where Russian has deployed about 15,000 troops to help fight anti-government Islamic guerrillas suspected of having bases in Afghanistan. The raid was the fifth Kabul report of bombing on Afghan border areas by Russian planes since early December. At least 45 people were reported killed in previous air attacks on Badakhshan and adjoining Takhar province. Earlier this month, Afghan authorities protested to Russia and Tajikistan against the bombing and denied they were helping the Tajik rebels.

Turkish would-be bomber dies in blast

ANKARA (R) — A man trying to fix a bomb to a car in Istanbul died of wounds he suffered when the explosive went off prematurely, Istanbul Police said on Wednesday. The blast occurred at a car parked outside a para-military gendarmerie compound in suburban Istanbul on Tuesday night. The man, who was found by gendarmes as he was crawling away from the car, died on the way to the hospital. Police said the man did not carry any identification and it was not yet known if he was linked to an extremist group. Urban extremists of the Dev-Sol and militants of the separatist Kurdish Labour Party have carried out scores of bomb attacks in Istanbul in recent years.


WHAT'S GOING ON

- THIRD JORDANIAN DRAMA FESTIVAL**
- Two plays (in Arabic) entitled "Seas in the Eyes" and "The Plague" respectively at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Friday at the Royal Cultural Centre.
 - EXHIBITIONS**
 - Exhibition of abstract art by Mohammad Labadi at Alia Art Gallery.
 - Exhibition of Children's works (from Haya Centre drawing and painting classes) at Goethe Institute.
 - Exhibition of works by Iraqi artist Fakhr Muhammad at the Ab'ad Art Gallery.
 - Exhibition of "Arab Contemporary Art" at Mona Saudi studio, Abdoun village (Tel. 829700).



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& THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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PROGRAMME TWO

| | |
|-------|------------------------------|
| 17:00 | Dipoldo |
| 17:30 | Jaina |
| 18:00 | News in French |
| 18:30 | N.B.A. |
| 19:45 | Planete En Equilibre |
| 20:30 | Road to Avonlea |
| 21:10 | The Hal Squad |
| 22:00 | News in English |
| 22:30 | Feature film: "Havana" |
| 23:59 | The Exile |

PRAYER TIMES

| | |
|-------|---------|
| 05:00 | Fajr |
| 06:29 | Sunrise |
| 11:48 | Dhuhr |
| 14:42 | Asr |
| 17:45 | Maghrib |
| 18:27 | Isha |

CHURCHES

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| St. Mary of Nazareth Church | Swedish, Tel. 810740 |
| Assembly of God Church, Tel. 527255 | |
| St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590 | |
| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440 | |
| St. John's Church Tel. 661757 | |
| Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366 | |

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| Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541 | |
| Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543 | |
| Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331 | |
| Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261 | |
| St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751 | |
| American International Church Tel. 625256 | |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328 | |
| German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 694195 | |
| The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932 | |
| Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991 | |
| The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295 | |

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise slightly with winds westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

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| Min./Max. temp. | |
| Amman | 4/15 |
| Aqaba | 8/21 |
| Deserts | 21/15 |
| Jordan Valley | 7/20 |

Yesterday's high temperatures' Amman 12, Aqaba 19, Humidity readings: Amman 76 per cent, Aqaba 53 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

| | |
|------------------------|--------|
| AMMAN: | |
| Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab | 758848 |
| Dr. Bassim Qadumi | 648633 |
| Dr. Yusef Abdo | 649116 |
| Dr. Yousef Al Fagih | 756988 |
| Firas pharmacy | 661912 |
| Ferdous pharmacy | 773336 |
| Al Asma pharmacy | 675755 |
| Nairouz pharmacy | 623672 |
| Al Salem pharmacy | 636730 |
| Yacoub pharmacy | 644945 |
| Shamsi pharmacy | 637660 |
| Najm pharmacy | 847632 |
| IRBID: | |
| Dr. Fayed Al Qadi | 248743 |
| Alquds pharmacy | (—) |
| ZARQA: | |
| Dr. Khalil Abu Hussein | 983000 |
| Khalil pharmacy | 935417 |

EMERGENCIES

| | |
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| Food Control Centre | 637111 |
| Civil Defence Department | 661111 |
| Civil Defence Immediate | 642816 |
| Rescue | 630341 |
| Civil Defence Emergency | 199 |
| Rescue Police | 192, 621111, 637777 |
| Fire Brigade | 617011 |
| Blood Bank | 773121 |
| Highway Police | 843402 |
| Traffic Police | 843390 |
| Public Security Department | 630521 |
| Hosni Complaints | 605800 |
| Police Complaints | 661176 |
| Water and Sewerage Complaints | 771013 |
| Amman Municipality Complaints | 787111 |
| Telephone Information (Directory assistance) | 121 |
| Overseas Calls | 010230 |
| Central Amman Telephone Repairs | 623101 |
| Abdali Telephone Repairs | 661101 |
| Radio Jordan | 774111 |
| Water Authority | 680100 |
| Jordan Electricity Authority | 815615 |

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Electric Power Company | 636281 |
| RJ Flight Information | 06-53200 |
| Queen Alia Intl. Airport | 06-53200 |

HOSPITALS

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|--------------------------|------------|
| AMMAN: | |
| Hussein Medical Centre | 813813-32 |
| Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn | 642816 |
| Akhil Maternity, J. Amn | 642412 |
| Jabal Amman Maternity | 642362 |
| Malbus, J. Amman | 636140 |
| Palestine, Shamsani | 6641714 |
| Shamsani Hospital | 669131 |
| University Hospital | 545845 |
| Al-Muasher Hospital | 6672276 |
| The Islamic, Abdali | 6612737 |
| Al-Ahli, Abdali | 6641646 |
| Indian, Al-Muasher | 771013 |
| Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh | 7711126 |
| Army, Marka | 8916115 |
| Queen Alia Hospital | 60224050 |
| Amal Hospital | 674125 |
| ZARQA: | |
| Zarqa Govt Hospital | (09)66323 |
| Zarqa National Hospital | (09)600360 |
| The Sina Hospital | (09)986732 |
| Al Huda Modern Hospital | (09)99098 |
| JERICH: | |
| Princess Basma Hospital | (02)72555 |
| Greek Catholic Hospital | (02)67275 |
| The Al Nohes Hospital | (02)747100 |
| AQABA: | |
| Pneuma Hava Hospital | (03)914111 |

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) | |
| 06:45 | Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ) |
| 07:00 | Aden (RJ) |
| 07:15 | Sana'a (RJ) |
| 07:30 | Riyadh (RJ) |
| 07:45 | Cairo (RJ) |
| 08:00 | London (RJ) |
| 08:15 | Athens (RJ) |
| 08:30 | Bahrain, Doha (RJ) |
| 08:45 | Jeddah (RJ) |
| 09:00 | Dubai, Muscat (RJ) |
| 09:15 | Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ) |
| 09:30 | Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ) |
| 09:45 | Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ) |
| 09:55 | Casablanca, Tunis (RJ) |
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BRIEF

ti-drugs campaign

an eastern neighbour, Pakistan, has launched a campaign against drug trafficking along its border with Afghanistan. The campaign is part of a broader effort to combat drug trafficking in the region. The Pakistani government has announced that it will provide financial and technical assistance to the Afghan government to help it combat drug trafficking. The campaign is expected to be a long-term effort.

s couple in Cyprus

A couple died of cancer in a hospital in Cyprus. The couple, who were married for 40 years, had been suffering from cancer for several years. The husband died first, and the wife died a few days later. The couple's death has been a tragedy for their family and friends.

ue to Sudan fighting

Due to the fighting in Sudan, the United Nations has decided to suspend its operations in the country. The UN has announced that it will suspend its operations in Sudan until the fighting has stopped. The suspension is expected to last for several months. The UN has expressed concern about the safety of its staff and the security of its operations in Sudan.

s four, Kabul says

Four people were killed in a car accident in Kabul, Afghanistan. The accident occurred on a busy street in the capital city. The car was carrying four people, and all of them were killed. The cause of the accident is still under investigation.

ber dies in blast

A man died in a blast in a crowded market in Baghdad, Iraq. The blast occurred when a car bomb exploded. The man was killed instantly. Several other people were injured. The cause of the blast is still under investigation.

n Fertilizer Limited

The National Fertilizer Limited has announced that it will be expanding its production capacity. The company has invested in new equipment and technology to increase its production. The expansion is expected to be completed within the next few months.

asako

Asako, a popular Japanese actress, has been nominated for an award. She has been nominated for the Best Actress award at the Japanese Academy Awards. Asako has been praised for her performance in her latest film.

MARKET PRICES

| Commodity | Price |
|-----------|--------|
| Wheat | 120.00 |
| Soybeans | 110.00 |
| Corn | 90.00 |
| Barley | 80.00 |
| Oats | 70.00 |
| Rice | 150.00 |
| Beans | 100.00 |
| Peas | 90.00 |
| Lentils | 80.00 |
| Flour | 60.00 |
| Sugar | 50.00 |
| Coffee | 40.00 |
| Tea | 30.00 |
| Cocoa | 20.00 |
| Spices | 10.00 |

EC to establish tourism marketing fund to promote Mideast abroad

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A marketing fund is to be established with the assistance of donor countries to promote the tourism sector of the Middle East region abroad. The fund will be managed by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture. The fund is expected to be a long-term effort to promote tourism in the Middle East.

region which should aim at increasing the size of productive investment.

The four principal themes of the workshop were: the Middle East in a global market; the role of government; standards of service and European customer expectations; and Europe-Middle East cooperation. Ms. Khatib said that the regional representatives had asked the EC for a down payment to start-up the project. The project, she explained, needs to be activated immediately in preparation for the next tourist season beginning in autumn.

A consensus was achieved regarding the standardisation of taxation applicable to tourists visiting the four countries, Ms. Khatib said.

It was also suggested the standardisation should envelope regulations on travel between the four destinations, services available and levels of hygiene, she added. To maintain the tourism industry it was agreed, Ms. Khatib said, that man-power and training levels needed to be raised. The sustainability of tourism rests on the balance of tourist flow versus the preservation of heritage and public participation, she said.

"It is important not to separate local communities from tourism sites since development necessitates their participation," Ms. Khatib told the Jordan Times.

She cited Waid Rum as an example where a corporation allowed inhabitants of the area to hold shares in its development. The importance of the prevailing peace to enable tourism to flourish was underlined by the fact that Greece alone receives about nine million tourists per year which is more than the four regional parties together, Ms. Khatib said.

Given the historic and social links and geographic proximity of Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the occupied territories, Ms. Khatib said, it is of "vital importance" that dialogue and cooperation exist between them.

The workshop was attended by around 70 delegates and speakers and marked a historic event for tourism in the Middle East, said the EC delegates, who added that interaction during the workshop was a further step forward in the implementation of the peace process.

Mr. Gazza underlined the need for comprehensive development of the tourism sector, including the public and private sectors. "Concerted action between the public and private sectors would be essential in order to make optimum use of existing and forthcoming resources," Mr. Gazza recommended.

In his concluding remarks he said that tourism should play an important role in the building of the peace process. Tourism, Mr. Gazza said, should complement a comprehensive strategy for the

IAF deputy, minister clash as lawmakers urge restraint

By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday witnessed a heated argument between Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Munem Abu Zant.

He said, however, that the ministry is preparing a cadre with files about all details to provide the required replies to the House at a later date.

The minister questioned why the deputy was insisting that he provide the full names of preachers and asked whether Sheikh Abu Zant suspected that the Ministry of Awqaf was tampering with the names.

He also questioned whether Sheikh Abu Zant's query was part of a campaign he was leading against the Ministry of Awqaf which started in an earlier Parliament session dedicated to the debate on the budget.

In reply, Dr. Abbadi said he had already answered similar questions put to him by House members, but that he could not provide an immediate reply to Sheikh Abu Zant's query because it would take a great deal of detailed work at the ministry.

ter's statement, Deputy Abu Zant used improper terms, accusing the minister of being ignorant of the basics of the Arabic language and lacking knowledge of his ministry's internal statutes.

House Speaker Saad Sour interfered in the dispute and ordered that the abusive language be completely struck from the record and appealed to the minister and the deputy to comply with the norms and rules of Parliament.

But Deputy Abu Zant continued his attack, stating that a minister should not suspect the questions put to him by a representative of the people. He said it was the minister who has exceeded the norms by accusing a Parliament member of launching a hostile campaign against the Ministry of Awqaf.

Furthermore the deputy said that some of the preachers who were appointed by the minister were imploring God to be merciful to the Jews — "the killers of all God's emissaries and prophets," according to the deputy.

Deputy Abu Zant was supported by another IAF member, Deputy Mohammad Oweida, who claimed that his colleague's improper terms were used in reply to the minister's "repugnant language."

A third deputy, Mohammad Daoudieh accused both the minister and the deputy of resorting to explosives and called for calm.

Abdullah Akaileh, another IAF deputy urged Sheikh Abu Zant to respect the House rules and avoid using abusive behaviour.

Later in the session, Finance Minister Basel Jaradach replied to a question about Jordanian lands in the Bakoura and Ghamr districts which were occupied by Israel and returned under the peace treaty signed in October last year.

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By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday witnessed a heated argument between Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Munem Abu Zant.

He said, however, that the ministry is preparing a cadre with files about all details to provide the required replies to the House at a later date.

The minister questioned why the deputy was insisting that he provide the full names of preachers and asked whether Sheikh Abu Zant suspected that the Ministry of Awqaf was tampering with the names.

He also questioned whether Sheikh Abu Zant's query was part of a campaign he was leading against the Ministry of Awqaf which started in an earlier Parliament session dedicated to the debate on the budget.

In reply, Dr. Abbadi said he had already answered similar questions put to him by House members, but that he could not provide an immediate reply to Sheikh Abu Zant's query because it would take a great deal of detailed work at the ministry.

ter's statement, Deputy Abu Zant used improper terms, accusing the minister of being ignorant of the basics of the Arabic language and lacking knowledge of his ministry's internal statutes.

House Speaker Saad Sour interfered in the dispute and ordered that the abusive language be completely struck from the record and appealed to the minister and the deputy to comply with the norms and rules of Parliament.

But Deputy Abu Zant continued his attack, stating that a minister should not suspect the questions put to him by a representative of the people. He said it was the minister who has exceeded the norms by accusing a Parliament member of launching a hostile campaign against the Ministry of Awqaf.

Furthermore the deputy said that some of the preachers who were appointed by the minister were imploring God to be merciful to the Jews — "the killers of all God's emissaries and prophets," according to the deputy.

Deputy Abu Zant was supported by another IAF member, Deputy Mohammad Oweida, who claimed that his colleague's improper terms were used in reply to the minister's "repugnant language."

A third deputy, Mohammad Daoudieh accused both the minister and the deputy of resorting to explosives and called for calm.

Abdullah Akaileh, another IAF deputy urged Sheikh Abu Zant to respect the House rules and avoid using abusive behaviour.

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Abdul Salam Al Abbadi



Abdul Munem Abu Zant

A warm welcome to

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Crown Prince Naruhito

&

Her Imperial Highness

Crown Princess Masako

on the occasion of their visit to the

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Lecture to explore new small business concept

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A new concept to help develop women's small business enterprises will be the focus of a one-day lecture held Thursday entitled "Industrial incubators" at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

The idea behind this lecture, said Hind Abdul Jabbar, president of the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC), an organizer of the lecture, is to discuss the possibility of having a group of women with small enterprises, benefit from working on industrialised machinery.

"Instead of having women purchase costly equipment for their small businesses, we will discuss the possibility of having groups of women benefitting from the same equipment," in one place — thus the term industrial incubators — Ms. Abdul Jabbar told the Jordan Times.

According to Ms. Abdul Jabbar, industrial incubators are successfully used in Europe and the United States, and we will try to come up with a clear view of the possibilities of succeeding in Jordan.

"Our aim is to decrease poverty and unemployment among women, and we believe this programme will help accomplish our goals," Ms. Abdul Jabbar added.

The lecture, which is also organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in coordination with the Economic

and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), will be followed by a three-day-workshop entitled "strengthening institutions for development of women's enterprises."

According to Zobra Merabet, regional programme advisor for UNIFEM, the lecture and the workshop are inter-related.

UNIFEM is working on two lines, Ms. Merabet said. One, she said, is very broad, with projects to strengthen institutions and training employees. The other, she added, is focused directly on working with women entrepreneurs and providing them with assistance to get started.

"UNIFEM will help the BPWC organise and plan their industrial incubator project," said Ms. Merabet, adding that "the workshop will focus on broad issues which will concern all sectors which influence and concern enterprises," Ms. Merabet told the Jordan Times.

The workshop, which will begin on Saturday at the Inter-Continental Hotel, will be attended by 20 representatives of ministries, banks, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

UNIFEM, created as a result of the International Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975 and established in 1976 by the United Nations as a volunteer fund, provides direct technical and financial support to programmes that promote women and improve the quality of life for all.

Italian-Arab commerce group to help on joint projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The head of a delegation from the Italian-Arab Chamber of Commerce Giorgio Marini told the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC) Wednesday that the Italian chamber was ready to extend assistance to Jordan to help it conduct studies and prepare for projects that could be carried out in the Kingdom by the Italian and Jordanian business communities.

Speaking at a meeting with Federation Chairman Haidar Murad, Mr. Marini said the Italian chamber appreciates Jordan's endeavours to promote trade with Italy and to promote investment in various sectors.

He said that the Italian chamber hopes to extend technical assistance for forming joint companies benefiting the Kingdom.

Mr. Murad highlighted the need to adjust the balance of trade between Italy and Jordan which is heavily in favour of Italy.

Jordan's imports from Italy amounted to \$151 million in the first nine months of 1994, compared with \$10 million worth of Jordan's exports to Italy, according to federation sources.

Emphasising Jordan's need for Italian assistance to conduct investment projects and deal with the consequences of the Gulf crisis, Mr. Murad said Italy enjoys a proven record of technological expertise and know-how and is an economic and technological world power from which Jordan can benefit a great deal.

Bomb blasts rock Dhaka

DHAKA (AFP) — Bomb blasts rocked Dhaka Wednesday on the second day of a nationwide strike called by the opposition, coinciding with a conference on international investment in Bangladesh.

The blasts, apparently caused by crude devices, were reported from near the forum's venue and the downtown areas of Motijheel and Mirpur. There were no immediate reports of any casualties.

Militant picketers marched through main streets shouting "Action, action, direct action" with riot police following them in trucks or on foot. Schools, shops and businesses were shut and vehicles, except for pedicabs, stayed off the streets here and in the southeastern port city of Chittagong.

Tension was palpable on the road between Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's office and the Songargaon Hotel, the venue for the Euro money International Investor's Conference. The meeting, which drew 700 participants, was in its final day Wednesday.

Security sources said reinforcements were deployed in the area Wednesday after a powerful homemade bomb was hurled Tuesday at Ms.

Zia's motorcade as she travelled from the conference to her office. The bomb did not hit any of the cars in the convoy.

The sources said eight suspects, including two women, were charged with carrying explosives or detained under the tough Special Powers Act of 1974, under which police can hold suspects for 120 days without filing specific charges.

"A probe has been ordered, as VIPs only move after complete security clearance," one source said.

Witnesses said those arrested were picked up at a procession of the main opposition group, the Awami League (AL).

Fifty people, including two senior AL leaders, were injured in police action and bomb blasts elsewhere after Tuesday's half-day general strike.

Ms. Zia's press secretary said the bomb attack was "not an attempt on the premier's life, but just a political stunt."

The premier left Dhaka Wednesday for a two-day trip to Sri Lanka in her capacity as the chairwoman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which also includes Bhutan, India, the



Police run for cover on Tuesday as smoke engulfs the area after a powerful home-made bomb burst as Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's motorcade passed during an opposition half-day anti-inflation general strike (AFP photo)

Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.

Senior opposition figures denied that the timing of the strikes — the latest in a series called by the opposition — was aimed at sapping investors' confidence in Bangladesh, thus opening an economic front in their 10-month-old campaign.

The opposition has come under fire from the business community for calling the stoppages.

"Strikes are our political culture... Making investment does not depend on such culture," said Moudud Ahmad, a former Bangladesh vice-president under the Jatiya Party (JP).

Tofael Ahmad, senior AL policymaker, added: "A

free-market economy depends on a stable political environment, which calls for a consensus between the government and opposition on common issues."

Police escorted ministers and guests to the venue of the conference.

Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the AL chief, said Tuesday's strike sought to protest against an unusual increase in the price of consumer goods ahead of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which starts in February.

The daytime fasts are often followed by night-time feasts, and much food is consumed during the month.

Wednesday's strike, she said, was to ensure citizens' voting rights.

Rao acts against rival; opposition warns of split

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao moved to tighten his grip on his Congress Party Wednesday after suspending his arch rival, but the opposition warned that the ruling party was poised to split.

Mr. Rao, who moved against nemesis Arjun Singh Tuesday after putting up with four weeks of revolt, was planning to sack the influential former minister from the Congress in a quick follow-up, party sources said.

"The ground has been prepared for Arjun Singh's expulsion," a source said, adding that the move was aimed at crushing dissent in the Congress and staving off any further challenges to Rao's leadership of the 109-year-old party.

The Congress, desperate to regain its fast-eroding appeal across the country, insisted Wednesday that Arjun Singh's suspension by Rao, the Congress president, would not lead to a split in the faction-ridden ruling party.

"A majority of Congressmen have welcomed the action against Arjun Singh," party spokesman Ved Prakash said. "Only a few disgruntled elements have

raised their voices against it. "There is no question of any split," he added.

But the simmering rebellion against Mr. Rao's faltering leadership refused to die down, and opposition parties, gloating over the turmoil in the Congress, said the ruling party would break up.

"The Congress is now a divided house, heading towards a split," said Muri Manohar Joshi, former president of the Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party, the country's main opposition group.

"No one can stop the Congress from breaking up," said Ram Vilas Paswan, a leader of the centrist People's Party. Added Geriste Fernandes, another centrist MP: "The Congress is on the threshold of a split."

Prakash Karat, a communist leader, said the suspension of Arjun Singh by Rao would "further intensify the crisis in the Congress" triggered by its election rout in two key southern states last month.

Arjun Singh, since quitting as human resources development minister Dec. 24, has blamed Mr. Rao for the Congress' washout in the December ballot, accusing him of condoning corruption and of failing to build up the party.

Muslims refuse to support Congress

Meanwhile, Reuters reported that Muslims, who feel betrayed by India's ruling Congress Party, have vowed to take revenge during next month's five state assembly polls by switching crucial support to other parties.

The agency quoted analysts as saying feelings were running high in the nation's Muslim community, which totals about 120 million in a nation of 900 million, two years after the Congress government failed to stop Hindu zealots demolishing a 400-year-old mosque.

The attack sparked off nationwide communal riots in which over 2,000 people were killed.

Muslims felt betrayed by the mosque's destruction, in spite of numerous assurances from the Congress Party the shrine would be adequately protected. Many Hindus believe that the mosque stood on the birthplace of the god Ram.

Muslims were hardest-hit in the riots that followed. Many saw their homes and livelihoods destroyed, while others felt they were the victims of police brutality.

Finns smoke least in Europe — study

HELSINKI (AFP) — Finns smoke less than the citizens of any other European country, according to a study by the Finnish Cancer Foundation published Wednesday.

The study showed that 27 per cent of men and 19 per cent of women in Finland smoke. By comparison, the study showed that 42 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women smoked in the 12 countries that made up the European Union (EU) prior to Jan. 1, 1995.

At least 35 per cent of men smoke in each of the 12 EU countries, while Portugal is the only country where women smoke less than in Finland. Women also smoke less in the 15 to 24 years age group. Among Finns in that category, 26 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women smoke. The corresponding figure in the 12 EU countries is 42 and 36 per cent respectively, the study said.

Belgians, Japanese, Americans win pastry competition

LYON, France (AP) — Entering chocolate confections and desserts from their homeland, a team of Belgian chefs has won the World Pastry Cup competition, followed by Japan and the United States. Belgium's Pierre Marcolini, Rik de Baere and Johnny Neuf took top honours Monday for their chocolate creation featuring three figures in flight. A chocolate-based ice cream desert and a selection of sweets native to Belgium were also among their entries. The pastry team will receive a special trophy sculpted by artist Antoine Arnaud and prize money of 9,000 European ECUs (\$7,200). Following the Belgians in second place was the Japanese team of Tadashi Yanagi, Taihei Oikawa, and Junichi Goto. The American team of Donald Wessel, Kurt Walrath, and Joe Decker took third. They will receive 6,000 ECUs (\$4,800) and 3,000 ECUs (\$2,400) respectively. Fifteen countries participated in the event, held every two years. The participating chefs were chosen by their national culinary organisations. France has usually won the prize, although Japan took the honour in 1991.

Condom most popular item on S. Korean shy shopping list

SEOUL (AFP) — Koreans are taking advantage of the privacy offered by computer home-shopping networks to avoid the embarrassment of asking for condoms in public, a department store survey showed Wednesday. The survey by the Shinsegae Department store in Seoul from October through December found that a set of 120 condoms worth \$36 was the most popular item on South Korea's "home shopping" list made through computer networks. "Computer home shopping is catching on here due to many convenient aspects," said a spokeswoman at the communications sales division. She said the home shopping ensured anonymity in purchasing embarrassing products such as condoms and also provided convenient automatic settlements through customers' banking accounts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bosnian army boycotts meeting

SARAJEVO (AFP) — The Bosnian army, charging lack of progress in cementing a four-month truce, has refused to meet Serb officers here, a U.N. spokesman said Wednesday, describing just one of the difficulties awaiting the new U.N. Bosnia commander. Officials from a five-nation "contact group," trying to get Bosnia peace negotiations on the rails again, had ended their latest mission, acknowledging they had failed to win Serb backing for their plan. U.N. military spokesman Gary Coward said senior officers from the mainly Muslim army were due to meet Thursday at Sarajevo airport with Serb counterparts to discuss implementing a cessation of hostilities agreement signed under U.N. auspices Dec. 31. But the session, a routine meeting of a central joint military commission, has been postponed until Feb. 2, Mr. Coward said, adding that U.N. authorities did not know how long the Bosnian protest would last.

Simpson man with two faces — prosecutor

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A prosecutor opened the murder case against O.J. Simpson Tuesday, saying that beneath his admitted image as an athlete and actor was a jealous batterer who killed his ex-wife out of jealousy because "he couldn't have her." Deputy District Attorney Christopher Darden described the jealous, ugly "other side" of an American icon as opening statements got under way in one of the most sensational murder trials in U.S. history. "The answer will be clear to you as well," Mr. Darden said, as he focused on the motive for the slayings. "The answer to the question is yes, O.J. Simpson murdered Nicole Brown and Ronald Goldman." Prosecutor Marcia Clark, who shared the prosecution statement with Mr. Darden, said there was an hour and ten minutes on the night of the murders during which Mr. Simpson's whereabouts were not accounted for, and said testimony would show that the defendant "was in an ugly mood, morose, depressed and clearly fixated on his wife."

Yeltsin marks Auschwitz

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin Wednesday marked the Auschwitz death camp liberation 50 years ago by formally rehabilitating millions of gulag prisoners. He acted to clear by official decree the names of Russians thrown into Soviet prison camps after World War II, ITAR-TASS news agency said. Russian troops liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau, symbol of the Nazi holocaust against the Jews, Jan. 27, 1945. But at home, Russian civilians and freed prisoners of war returning from camps in Germany and German-occupied Europe were branded as collaborators and spies by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin. They were incarcerated in the Soviet gulag system of prison camps. Many died after spending years in brutal conditions.

2 deaths send Zimbabwe doctor to jail

HARARE (R) — A white Zimbabwean doctor at the centre of a race uproar over accusations he experimented on blacks was ordered Wednesday to spend six months in prison at hard labour for causing the deaths of two patients. Richard Gladwell McGowan, 58, an anaesthetist of Scottish descent, appeared shocked as high court judge Paddington Garwe said he had been negligent, especially in the treatment of a 20-month-old boy who died hours after a circumcision. The boy was given heavier-than-normal dose of morphine and was discharged immediately after the operation.

Court rejects Bhutto's appeal

KARACHI (AFP) — A special court judge trying Murtaza Bhutto, the estranged brother of Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, an terrorism charges dismissed his appeal for an acquittal here Wednesday. Justice Ghulam Ali W. Shaikh said the hearing was in its final phase, commenting that the acquittal request had been "moved at a belated stage." Lawyers for the premier's estranged brother said the appeal was based on the failure of the prosecution to prove its charges. Murtaza and 19 others are being tried for their alleged participation in a gun battle on the high seas in 1992 between a Pakistani naval patrol and suspected terrorists who were believed to belong to Murtaza's Al Zulfiqar Organisation (AZO).

Future of Collenette in doubt

OTTAWA (AFP) — The scandal around a bunch of racist thugs in Canada's most elite regiment made more waves Tuesday with doubts being expressed over the future of the country's top soldier. Defence Minister David Collenette announced Monday he was discharging the Canadian Airborne Regiment following publication of a videotape showing Airborne paratroopers making racist remarks about Somalis while the Canadians were on peacekeeping duties in Somalia. Another videotape showed a hazing of recruits at the Airborne's headquarters in Petawawa, Ontario, in which the recruits were forced — among other things — to eat human faeces, vomit and urine-drenched bread.

British frigate, German sub, collide

LONDON (AFP) — A Royal Navy frigate and a German submarine collided in the English Channel on a nighttime joint exercise early Wednesday, causing minor damage, the Defence Ministry here said. The two vessels were taking part in a routine joint naval exercise and were able to return to the Portland naval base in southwest England without assistance, it added.

Burmese army closes in on rebels

BANGKOK (R) — Several thousand Karen civilians from Burma have fled to Thailand as Rangoon government forces closed in on the minority group's guerrilla headquarters on the border, guerrilla and Thai military sources said Wednesday.

A Thai officer monitoring the situation said Burmese government troops were continuing a heavy artillery bombardment of Karen positions around their Manerplaw headquarters.

Burmese troops have crossed the Salween River, Manerplaw's last major line of defence to the west, and fighting was taking place along a ridge line above the rebel headquarters, a senior guerrilla source said.

Government forces had also made significant advances from both the south and the north towards the Karen National Union (KNU) headquarters.

More than 2,000 civilians and wounded guerrillas have crossed the border river Moie to Thailand since last week when Burmese troops began what may be their final push on Manerplaw.

"The situation is getting bad. We have been forced to relocate a field hospital to the Thai side of the river," said a Karen guerrilla source.

The KNU, in a statement dated Tuesday, confirmed that the government troops had attacked and seized important positions around their headquarters.

"The military situation continues to become more tense... in recent days the SLORC troops have occupied key positions along the Salween River," the KNU said, referring to the Rangoon Junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

S. Korea proposes resuming Korean talks

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea Wednesday proposed resuming inter-Korean talks, partially accepting a Pyongyang proposal for joint celebrations in August to mark the 50th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese rule.

"We propose that the two sides hold talks among responsible authorities to discuss pending issues, including the joint celebration of the 50th Liberation Day," Vice Unification Minister Song Yong-Dae said in a statement.

"We (the two Koreas) have to mark the 50th anniversary of the division of Korea by ending confrontation and animosity and opening a new era of peace and unification," Mr. Song said.

Mr. Song suggested each side send a three-member delegation headed by a vice minister for the proposed talks.

"The sooner the vice minister-level talks are held, the better," he said.

The proposal was a reaction to the North's offer late Tuesday that the two sides hold a national conference to celebrate the anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule Aug. 15 and discuss ways of national unification.

Kim Yong-Sun, chairman of the Reunification Policy Committee of the North's Supreme People's Assembly, proposed that various political parties, social groups and all walks of life of both sides should attend the "grand national conference" in Pyongyang.

But Kim Yong-Sun, a known confidant of Kim Il-Sung's son and successor Kim Jong-Il, pointedly omitted reference to the Southern government as a dialogue partner in the proposal, which the North's official media said was outlined in a report to a joint meeting of political and social groups in Pyongyang.

Mr. Song, of the South,

U.S. defends N. Korea pact

In Washington, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in his first testimony before the new Republican-led congress, Tuesday defended a landmark nuclear accord with North Korea and expressed confidence any cheating will be detected.

"The burden of upfront performance falls on North Korea, not the United States," he told the Senate foreign relations committee, adding that the agreement is structured so that "we are not disadvantaged in any significant way if (North Korea) reneges on its commitments — at any time."

Mr. Christopher said implementation of the accord, signed with Pyongyang last Oct. 21, is proceeding smoothly but "we are confident about our ability to determine if the North is cheating."

Under the agreement, North Korea agreed to halt and eventually dismantle its nuclear programme in return for an estimated \$4.5 billion package of new nuclear technology and alternative energy supplies.

King Moshoeshe retakes throne

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — King Moshoeshe of the Butha Buthe kingdom in the southern African nation of Lesotho regained the throne Tuesday after being ousted from power last year. He was crowned in a ceremony in the capital, Maseru, on Tuesday. King Moshoeshe, 68, was crowned in a ceremony in the capital, Maseru, on Tuesday. He was crowned in a ceremony in the capital, Maseru, on Tuesday.

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AND
PRINCESS MASAKO
OF JAPAN

WISHING THEM A VERY HAPPY STAY IN JORDAN AND A MOST
SUCCESSFUL VISIT THAT WILL REINFORCE JORDANIAN-JAPANESE
EXCELLENT RELATIONS IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH NATIONS.



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and wish them best stay in their second country Jordan
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Clinton shows he can bend with political wind

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton, showing he can bend with the new political wind, took up the Republican challenge to re-vamp government while vowing to defend his past achievements, in a mid-term speech aimed at winning back voter support.

"Our job is to get rid of yesterday's government ... and we ought to do it together," Mr. Clinton said late Tuesday in the first State of Republican-controlled Congress in 40 years.

He called for a new "social compact" to change the United States that largely mirrored the "Contract with America" Republicans have been pushing through Congress since their stunning November electoral victory.

"We must have dramatic change in our economy, in our government and in ourselves," Mr. Clinton said.

In an almost hour-and-a-half-long discourse, televised live nationwide, Mr. Clinton focused on domestic issues, seeking to take back the policy initiative from the Republicans and lay down a programme for the remaining two years of his mandate.

Mr. Clinton took a conciliatory tone, trying to identify common ground with the Republicans, and win back the support of the middle class whose mass defection cost his Democratic Party the November election.

He pledged tax cuts, \$130 billion in budget cuts and

more reductions in the budget deficit, something the Republicans have pledged in their Contract for America.

New Jersey Governor Christine Whitman, giving the Republican response to Mr. Clinton's speech, challenged Clinton to deliver the changes espoused by her party.

"At times tonight, some of the president's ideas sounded pretty Republican," Ms. Whitman said.

But "the fact remains that he has been opposed to the balanced budget (constitutional) amendment" proposed by the Republicans to prevent future increase in the budget deficit.

And Senate Republican leader Bob Dole said that "the most important and most powerful message remains the one the American people delivered in November."

The speech was interrupted more than 90 times by applause from both parties, although some Republican lawmakers left before its conclusion.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said later that Clinton was pleased with the reception he was given, quoting him as saying: "I had no idea the Republicans would be so gracious."

House Majority leader Dick Armey suggested that Clinton had expressed direct or indirect support for seven of the 10 points in the Republicans contract.

"If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, on

behalf of all Republicans, I thank the president for his compliment," said Republican Representative for Ohio John Boehner.

Democrats disagreed. "It was not a me-too speech," said Democratic Representative for California Maxine Waters.

Clinton promised a crack-down on illegal immigration, a favourite Republican cause, and called for action to deal with "our most serious social problem," teenage pregnancy.

But in addition to the promises, and a list of his achievements over the past two years, Clinton acknowledged his failures, saying that "I have made my mistakes and learned again the importance of humility in all human endeavour."

The U.S. president in particular noted the failure of his health reform programme.

But while some of what Mr. Clinton had to say brought the Republicans to their feet to applaud, the president also made it clear that he was not about to abandon his own policy agenda entirely.

A CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll taken before and after the speech showed an increase in Mr. Clinton's approval rating, with those believing he was leading the country in the right direction going from 54 per cent to 83, and those believing he was successful at resolving problems rising from 54 per cent to 66 per cent.

Excerpts from Union Address

WASHINGTON (AP) — Following are excerpts from President Clinton's annual State of the Union Address Tuesday.

On immigration:

"This is a nation of immigrants. But it is also a nation of law. And it is wrong, and ultimately self-defeating, for a nation of immigrants to permit the kind of abuse of our immigration laws we have seen in recent years."

On health care:

"Last year, we bit off more than we could chew. This year, let's work together, step by step, and get something done."

On the ban against assault-type weapons:

"These people laid down their seats in Congress to try to keep more police and children from laying down their lives in our streets under a hail of assault weapons' bullets. And I will not see that ban repealed."

On terrorism:

"As the cowards who bombed the World Trade Centre can testify, the United States will hunt down terrorists and bring them to justice."

On raising the nation's minimum wage:

"The weight of evidence is that a modest increase does not cost jobs and may even lure people into the job market. But the plain fact is you can't make a living on \$4.25 an hour."

On tax cuts:

"I know a lot of you have your own ideas about tax relief. I want to work with you. My test for any proposal is: 'Will it create jobs and raise incomes ... strengthen families ... shrink the underclass? Is it paid for? If it does, I will support it. If it doesn't, I will oppose it.'"

On American security concerns:

"A lot of people think that the security concerns of America today are entirely internal to our borders. They relate to the security of our jobs, and our homes, and our incomes, and our children, our streets, our health and protecting those borders. Now that the cold war is past, it's tempting to believe that all the security issues with the possible exception of trade, reside here at home, but it's not so."

Dini wins confidence vote

ROME (AP) — Premier Lamberto Dini's non-partisan government won confirmation Wednesday in the Chamber of Deputies, thanks to the abstention of predecessor Silvio Berlusconi and his conservative allies in the confidence vote.

The vote was 302 in favour and 39 opposed, with 270 abstentions. A simple majority of 171 — or one more than the number of deputies voting in the lower parliamentary chamber — was needed to win.

Leading the support for the new government of "technocrats" were Mr. Berlusconi's opponents when he was premier, a centre-left coalition in the lower chamber of parliament led by former communists.

Mr. Dini still faces a confidence vote in the upper chamber, the Senate. That appointment was changed Wednesday from Jan. 31 to Feb. 1.

The former central banker's prospects for success in that vote appeared good, as Mr. Berlusconi and other conservative leaders who led their deputies in abstaining in the chamber, indicated they might do similarly in the Senate.

Although the chamber's confirmation was widely expected, the Italian lira strengthened immediately against the benchmark German mark after the vote was announced by the chamber's president in a live transmission by Rai state TV. The mark fell to 1,047.75 lire from 1,094.05 right after the vote.

During the weeks of political conflict prompting Mr. Berlusconi's resignation Dec. 22 and until Mr. Dini was tapped earlier this month to replace him, the lira set daily record lows against the mark.

Two hours before the vote, Mr. Dini made a last, but futile appeal to win Mr. Berlusconi's backing for what is Italy's 54th postwar government.

However, with Berlusconi already assuring that his Forza Italia Party and right-wing allies would abstain, confirmation of Mr. Dini seemed sealed.

Mr. Dini was treasury minister in Mr. Berlusconi's conservative coalition, which collapsed after Umberto Bossi, the leader of the Northern League, a coalition partner,



Northern League leader Umberto Bossi addresses the Italian parliament on Tuesday to announce that his party will support Lamberto Dini's new government in Wednesday's vote of confidence (AFP photo).

joined former communists in bringing no-confidence motions against Mr. Berlusconi.

Mr. Berlusconi, a media baron, crusaded for new elections to give him a fresh infusion of support from voters.

But Mr. Dini, chosen by President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to lead a government of professors, former judges and other respected figures, considered outside politics, steadfastly refused Mr. Berlusconi's push to set an election date.

Mr. Dini said he was personally appealing to Mr. Berlusconi for support to help him carry out the urgent goals he defined for his government.

The goals include reforming Italy's bloated pensions system, possible new taxes to trim a huge deficit, electoral reform, and anti-trust legislation that would likely force Mr. Berlusconi to give up one or more of his three private TV networks.

Mr. Dini has pledged to resign as soon as the reforms

are carried out, or if they prove impossible to achieve in parliament.

But Mr. Berlusconi made clear Wednesday that assurance was not enough to win his forces' vote of confidence.

"Ours isn't a 'no,' it's an abstention, a 'yes' with reservation," Mr. Berlusconi said, referring to his Forza Italia Party's decision to abstain in the confidence vote but to back Mr. Dini in parliament on key legislation.

Mr. Berlusconi contends that a non-political government betrays the will of the voters, who gave him and his conservative allies a clear mandate in parliamentary elections last March after corruption scandals wrote the end to the long-ruling Christian Democrat and socialist parties.

Voting in favour of Mr. Dini's government were Mr. Bossi's loyalists who have split with the coalition, while 11 league deputies who broke with Mr. Bossi over the no-confidence motions stuck by Mr. Berlusconi in abstaining.

King Moshoeshoe of Lesotho retakes throne

MASERU (AFP) — Lesotho's King Moshoeshoe II Wednesday regained the throne he was ousted from five years ago, promising reconciliation and peace after decades of political turbulence in the southern African kingdom.

"We will go back to the unity that we knew before this difficult period," he promised some 10,000 cheering supporters who witnessed the voluntary abdication of outgoing King Letsie in favour of his father.

King Moshoeshoe was de-throned in 1990 and replaced by his son by the then military rulers who accused the

king of interfering in the running of the country.

Mr. Letsie, in turn, staged a royal coup last August, partly in a bid to have his father regain the throne.

The constitutional crisis was only resolved after the intervention of the presidents of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana who forced Mr. Letsie to reinstate the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle.

The crowd broke into wild cheers as a tearful father and son hugged after the short ceremony before Chief Justice Joseph Cheola.

Matriarch Rose laid to rest

BOSTON (AFP) — The Kennedy family, which has known the sorrow of burying many of its members cut down in their prime, hid farewell Tuesday to Rose, the clan's 104-year-old matriarch.

"Mother knew this day was coming, but she did not dread it. She accepted and even welcomed it, not as a leaving, but as a returning," her only surviving son Senator Edward Kennedy said in eulogy at the funeral service.

"She has gone to God. She is home. And at this moment, she is happily presiding at a heavenly table with both of her sons, with Jack and Kathleen, with Bobby and David," he said recalling

family members already departed.

"She sustained us in the saddest time — by her faith in God, which was the greatest gift she gave us — and by the strength of her character, which was a combination of the sweetest gentleness and the most tempered steel," Mr. Kennedy added.

About 100 people, including John Kennedy Junior, his sister Caroline, and film star Arnold Schwarzenegger, who married into the family, attended the ceremony.

The White House delegation to the funeral included Tipper Gore, wife of Vice President Al Gore.

Roman Catholic Cardinal Bernard Law presided over

the service and read a telegram of condolences Pope John Paul II sent.

Ms. Kennedy, the mother of assassinated President John Kennedy, died Sunday of complications from pneumonia at the family compound in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts.

Funeral services were held at Old St. Stephen's Church — where she had been baptised in 1890 — in Boston's historic North End.

The church is nestled in a mostly working class area of the city which harks back to the family's roots as Irish-Americans who rose from the backwaters of local politics to the most powerful offices in the world.

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Liberating potential is goal

IN HIS policy statement to Parliament yesterday, Prime Minister Zeid Ben Shaker said that his government sees "democracy as an irreversible way of life ... a way of liberating creative potential to achieve progress in all aspects of life." In that framework, the Prime Minister strongly indicated, his cabinet would now go ahead and give life to a centre for freedom, democracy and human rights, the idea of which was broached back in 1993 by His Majesty King Hussein and the government of then-Prime Minister Sharif Zeid himself.

We believe that the intended centre, once it assumes its responsibilities — and it is now for Parliament to make the centre's mandate both comprehensive and practical — would contribute positively to enhancing the concepts of freedom, democracy and human rights. Let us remember that concepts like decentralisation, the rule of law and free market economics are all devoid of meaning until human rights are respected, freedom is enshrined in all laws and democracy is fully adhered to in our daily practices.

Freedom, for example, requires minimum government intervention in people's lives. This unfortunately has not been the case in Jordan. Successive governments aided by Parliaments have always sought, and still do, to regulate people's lives and to interfere in every activity they do. Education, health and even a sizeable chunk of our trade have been either largely controlled by the public sector or totally regulated by it.

On the other hand, the relationship between soaring unemployment and higher education in the country has been awkward at best. Conventional wisdom would have us believe that a proliferation of universities would raise unemployment, but is it not true that more universities should immediately create thousands of job opportunities in certain sectors?

What is so encouraging about the government's statement yesterday is indeed its pledge to "liberate the people's creative potential to achieve progress in all aspects of life." Yet what we need to realise is that people's creative potential can only be released through less government intervention and more interaction by the people in running their affairs. Governments everywhere have proved time and again that no matter how efficient they are, they cannot outperform citizens when the issue at stake is managing their everyday lives.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIIST in Al Ra'i Wednesday said that the Arab negotiators with Israel, starting from the conference of 1991, have committed an error by overlooking the need of a working committee entrusted with the task of securing a nuclear free zone in the Middle East. Ibrahim Al Absi said that the negotiators ought to have insisted that such a committee be created, like those which deal with energy, economy, water etc., so that the Arabs can be sure of a safe future and Israel's nuclear programmes can be placed under control. Noting that the Arabs would not be demanding that the United States force Israel to subject its nuclear programme to inspection because such a request would not draw a positive response, the writer said that at least the Arab states can back Egypt's demands that Israel sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty so, as to ensure that the Middle East becomes a nuclear free zone. The Arabs can also add this issue to the agenda of the multilateral phase of the ongoing peace process and set a special committee to deal with the issue, added the writer. He said that unless Israel is made to comply with the Arab countries' demand, the Arabs will not renew their commitment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and will have to work towards amassing nuclear weapons to ensure their safety.

IN COMMENTING on Israel's decision to separate the occupied Arab lands from Israel, Taher Al Adwan, a columnist in Al Dussour said that the decision could lead to permanent peace or a worsening of the situation, depending on Israel's real intentions. If the separation idea implies ensuring security for the Israelis only, then such a move would mean a siege on the Arabs who would subsequently escalate their resistance activities against the occupation, said the writer. On the other hand, he said, if the separation is geographical in nature, leading to the consolidation of Arab demands for return to the pre-1967 borders, the move would be a welcome development because it would mean stability and a step towards the creation of the long-awaited Palestine state.

The View from Academia

Peace in Palestine: Rectifying faults, failing and follies

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

ONE IS vexed, disappointed and even disillusioned with what is presently happening in Palestine at large. In Israel, in the occupied territories and the self-rule areas. Anywhere you look, things appear quite messy. The news we hear or watch daily is more bad than good, peace between the Palestinians and Israel is moving in no clear direction and is at a deadly standstill, and the prospects of the bright future we have all been anticipating and praying for do not seem to be good in the least.

The "signs of the times," to quote Carlyle, are ominous, and the overall atmosphere is unhealthy. Even though I am generally an optimist and even though I still firmly believe that the best of times may very well emerge out of the worst of times in ways that many of us may not be able to predict or understand, I must nonetheless admit that I was more hopeful a couple of years or even than a year ago that I am now.

When the Palestinian self-rule agreement with Israel was reached in Oslo in September 1993, I, like many in the region, thought the agreement was a step in the right direction. To be sure, there were reservations about it: Why Gaza and Jericho in particular (perhaps the two most depressed and impoverished Palestinian regions)? Why negotiate a secret deal in Oslo behind the backs of official Palestinian and Israeli teams already negotiating diligently and openly in Washington? Are not clandestine deals somewhat fishy and dubious? Why so many ambiguities in the text of the accord? Why did not the Palestinians insist on calling the occupied territories occupied territories? Why, why, why?

Despite these reservations and many others, one felt the agreement was potentially positive and constructive. In fact, one could have easily turned the reservations against themselves and turned the tables against the sceptics and the critics. Gaza and Jericho (unlike what some would have us believe) are as important, fundamental and vital as any other Palestinian territory (with the clear exception of Jerusalem). The claim that Israel does not want them (this is what we heard at the time) is remarkably short-sighted, to say the least. Could not the atmosphere prevailing throughout clandestine talks be more congenial to progress and give and take than that prevailing throughout highly publicised (and therefore highly tense and highly cautious) open meetings? Do not politicians conduct most real business behind closed doors? Can there ever be a language of a mutual political agreement which is not inevitably ambiguous and fluid? Does not the successful implementation of agreements depend largely on a genuine desire to implement, on good intentions, on goodwill, on common sense, on mutual respect, on a sense of fairness, on profound vision, on a sense of integrity, on true commitment? Since Oslo (and unlike in the far more pleasant and far more pleasing Jordanian-Israeli talks), there has not much genuine desire, many good intentions, much goodwill, much common sense, etc. The point to stress here is that most of the reservations and criticism of the Palestinian-Israeli deal I have heard so far are more pesuasive and intelligent when they address the conduct of Israeli and the PLO/PNA in the aftermath of Oslo than when they address the deal itself.

The thing about Gaza-Jericho First, which one appreciated most (and to some extent still does) stemmed from the fact that the agreement was an opportunity, a challenge and a test for both the Palestinians and Israel. How were the Palestinians (whose "sole" representative — the PLO — is largely untried as a governing body) to run their affairs and to govern themselves? How was the PLO to transform itself from a revolutionary organisation into a government? What was the long-awaited Palestinian homeland (or nucleus of a homeland) to be like? What would the relations between the Palestinians and Israelis be like? How was Israel to treat Gaza and Jericho? What spirit would Israel show in implementing the agreement and committing itself to the various promises and deadlines. Unfortunately, so far the opportunity has not been used properly, the challenge has not been lived up to, and the

test has not been passed.

Ironically, the best function or result of the Gaza-Jericho First so far (and the agreement has been most enlightening and instructive in this respect) lies in its exposure of both Israeli and Palestinian failings, faults and follies. Until now, the Palestinian and Israeli sides have failed miserably not just in translating the agreement into a tangible reality but also in dealing with each other smoothly, fairly and professionally. For this, thanks go (though ironically and perversely) to the Oslo agreement without which we would not have seen the Israelis and Palestinians make fools of themselves in implementing the agreement and waste a historic opportunity and breakthrough (so far).

Has not the misery of the Palestinians increased since Oslo? Has not violence throughout Palestine doubled, tripled and quadrupled? Ought not the Palestinians and Israelis be celebrating, now that almost a year and half have passed since Oslo, instead of suffering?

What has gone wrong, and why? This is a question which the Palestinians and Israelis have to attempt to answer, honestly and courageously, if they are to salvage what is left of the agreement.

Obviously, a great deal is wrong. My aim here is not to enumerate all the causes, or even most of them; this is a task better left to the Palestinian and Israeli experts. What I wish to do, rather, is to suggest some of the deeper, the most troubling and uncalled for causes.

Undeniably, the situation itself is partly to blame. We have to remember that the Palestinian-Israeli dimension is the most difficult and complex to deal with: It is more difficult and complex than the Israeli-Lebanese, Israeli-Jordanian, and Israeli-Syrian dimension. Yes, the Palestinian cause is the core of the Middle East problem and yes, it is quite expected and natural for it to be the most difficult to tackle. But Israel is to blame. If I were to identify the one root cause lurking behind Israel's abuse of the self-rule agreement and its flagrant subversion of it (deliberate or inadvertent), I would say it is a mixture of selfishness, chauvinism, arrogance and greed. This is, in my opinion, where the true problem lies.

When one says this, one is not just talking about the Israeli settlers, most of whom are too narrow-minded, too aversive, too violent, too inhuman, and too unrealistic and impossible. They usurp other people's land, fence it, build on it and deprive its owners of it without even the smallest degree of shame or guilt. And they are willing to shoot Palestinian civilians in cold blood for saying no to confiscation of the land.

But what is there in talking about the settlers? Their mentality and their practices are obvious to everyone. In Israel's own admission, they are "crazy" and "fanatical." Let's lay the blame then on the "moderates" and the "liberals" — the "enlightened" Labour government. I do not deny that Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres have made courageous steps and have taken constructive decisions throughout the various stages of the peace process, but their lukewarmness vis-a-vis Palestinian rights, their indifference to the promises they make, their disrespect of the deadlines they agree upon, and (most visibly) their position regarding the settlements and Jerusalem are both unacceptable and intolerable (despite the claim that they are at times "pressured" by the more radical parties and groups). Is it sensible and fair for Mr. Peres' deputy, Yossi Beilin, to say that the Israeli government "will insist" that the West Bank settlements, especially those near Jerusalem, be on Israel's permanent map? Is it sensible and fair of the Israeli cabinet (last Sunday) to "okay" more building around Jerusalem and in "state-owned" lands around the settlements? Since when is occupied land "state-owned"? All the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are illegal and are to be either dismantled or evacuated.

If Israel is to keep the settlements on its map, and if the settlements are to be linked with a network of roads, what is left of the occupied territories? If the Palestinians are to forget about the territories occupied in and before 1948 (the largest chunk of Palestine) and if they are to leave the

settlers where they are, then the Palestinian refugees will remain dispersed and the Palestinians in the occupied territories will have a space more like that of a prison than a homeland. Where then is the solution to the "liberal," "progressive," and "enlightened" Rabin government from the settlers? And how different is it from them when it insists that Jerusalem (all of Jerusalem) is its unified and eternal capital, when the Muslims and the Christians have more religious sites than the Israelis do? Is not this selfish, chauvinistic, arrogant and greedy? Is not this mentality the real obstacle standing in the way of meaningful peace? Some may say that such statements on part of Israel are mere rhetoric and negotiating tactics. Well, I hope so; otherwise, how can Israel be serious about peace?

As for the Palestinians (represented at this point by the PLO/PNA), there is much to blame them for. Of course we sympathise with the difficult position the PLO/PNA is in, having to deal with uncommitted, lukewarm peace partners such as Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres (at present), with impoverished territories to run, with a largely unemployed population, with donors reluctant to pay what they have pledged, with extremists and reactionists who hope to see it fail, and so on and so forth.

But the PLO/PNA is to blame nonetheless, for many reasons. I shall confine myself to two or three. First, it has failed to live up to the image expected of it. No matter what the reasons, excuses or pretexts are, the PNA as a whole looks inefficient, incompetent, bland, boring, unheroic, dull, confused, hopeless and pathetic. Even though some of its members are intelligent, exciting and potentially heroic as individuals, as a team they are not a pretty sight to look at. They seem to be stuck, going around in circles and arriving nowhere.

Secondly, the PNA has so far failed to make use of the Palestinian potential at large. These moments in history are supposed to be so exciting and so crucial for the Palestinians. This is on the one hand. On the other hand, the Palestinians as a people have so much to offer: financially, intellectually, politically and socially. They have the resources and the experience. The PNA has not been the catalyst it is supposed to be, a catalyst which makes effective use of the Palestinian potential. In fact, it seems to have fragmented and torn apart its own people and seems to have alienated itself from them. Three people are smarter than one, and five than three.

Thirdly, and equally importantly, the PNA has failed to coordinate meaningfully with Jordan. I do not deny that all the Arab countries, from the Gulf to the ocean, are valuable brothers, but Jordan is the most precious (or ought to be) to Palestinians. For one thing, the fate, the destiny, the geography, the economy, the demography, the sociology and the culture of the two peoples are so intertwined and inter-connected that one cannot live in isolation from the other. For another, the Jordanian experience with institution building and with democracy is so vital, the PNA could benefit a lot from Jordan (at a time when the PNA is being criticised for lack of democratic institutions). Moreover, the fact that the Jordanian government has finalised a very successful peace treaty with Israel and that it has at present a good working relationship with it can only be an asset to the PNA, as a mediator and a partner. Closer coordination with Jordan is a must.

My intention here not to be critical or cynical. The point is clear. There is a big chance for everyone in the Middle East, especially in Palestine (where there is still a problem), to live (and let live) decently, fairly and squarely. We have to see the concerned parties blow this chance. Israel must wake up, be less selfish and arrogant. The moderate Israelis have to assert themselves more, positively, and constructively. By their lukewarmness and silence, they are allowing the radicals and the fanatics to flourish. The PNA must pull its act together, affirm itself competently and efficiently, and embrace all sensible parties and individuals. There is nothing worse than being alienated, alienating or mediocre.

Sharif Zeid pledges commitment to democracy, cooperation with the legislature

Government confidence speech translation provided by Petra News Agency

IN the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful May Allah's prayers and peace be upon the Arab Prophet, His kin and companions

Your excellency the Speaker of the House Distinguished deputies May Allah's peace His mercy and His blessings be upon you.

We thank Allah, the Almighty, for gathering us in this joint session of the legislative and executive authorities, at a time when our country is entering a new era which His Majesty King Hussein wanted to be an era of change where we continue building a state of law and institutions, enhancing democratic practice, realising social justice and equality among all citizens, moving comprehensive reform into a stage of reassessment steered by clear vision and sound methodology, and reacting to challenges imposed by confrontations out of which Jordan emerged with dignity and pride. What I mean by this is that Jordan stood up to economic challenges, with steadfastness when it was besieged, and stubbornly determined to restore full sovereignty over its land thus regaining its rightful share of water, and carrying its duty towards its nation in accordance with the principles of the Great Arab Revolt. Jordan continued its achievements in various fields despite the huge challenges, and Jordanians remained patient and courageous in facing the difficulties with full confidence in the inevitability of overcoming these crises, abiding by their constitution, charter and laws, dignified in their patience and pride, forgiving in their civility and sacrifices.

In submitting to your distinguished Parliament the government's statement for your vote of confidence, we reaffirm our commitment to spare no effort in extending our full cooperation to the legislative authority, in order to enhance the bases of parliamentary life in all its aspects, and in a manner that guarantees the full commitment to the principle of the separation of power

in the context of cooperation and balance among them in accordance with the constitution.

Constructive dialogue, and the sense of national responsibility would constitute our pivotal axis for cooperation with the deputies and representatives of our nation.

We affirm under this dome and in accordance with the spirit of the letter of appointment, our commitment to the state of law and institutions and declare before your House our adherence to the constitution in letter and spirit, to the national charter as an intellectual reference and an operational guideline, and to the prevalence of law as a basis for justice and equality among people. We also affirm our commitment to democracy based on political pluralism, the respect of freedom of thought, and public and private freedoms, while affirming that democracy for us is an irreversible way of life, and that there will be no turning back from moving forward to enhance it and build its institutions, as a means of realising our national and pan-Arab objectives, and as a way of liberating creative potential to achieve progress in all aspects of life.

My government will continue pursuing the factors for constructing the qualified and capable model which can respond to the needs of our people and our nation. In this context, the government will forward to your distinguished House during the current session a draft law for a centre of studies for freedom, democracy and human rights to be an intellectual beacon as His Majesty wanted it to be, a tool of developing and monitoring the democratic performance, and a catalyst that would contribute to the democratic model shouldered by all Jordanians in all constitutional, political party and union positions.

The government will also reconsider the election law, the law of public gatherings and the crime prevention law with the aim of modernising them to cope with democracy and as an enhancement to the state of law and institutions.

My government will continue working to establish communication and dialogue channels with the political parties to discuss public affairs of concern to the citizen and the country in its

effort to enhance political pluralism and to deepen the democratic path.

There will also be a continued dialogue and contacts with trade and labour unions, industry and commerce chambers, the farmers union and other economic and private institutions. This will provide a means through which the government probes the concerns of these vast sectors of citizens, and their aspirations with an eye to upgrade them.

The government will exert every effort to elevate the status of the judicial system affirming full commitment to guarantee and safeguard its independence and enhance its tools and potentials in order to shoulder its responsibilities in deepening the democratic practice in the context of the state of law.

The judicial system will be the government's top priority in the sense of activating the legislative system concerning filing suits and modifying them. The government will provide all the necessary requirements to establish the needed courts in all parts of the Kingdom, enabling the citizen to reach the system easily. The government will also establish notary public and execution departments in order to facilitate the access to judicial services to the public.

The government believes that providing the suitable climate for judges the content of new posts would contribute to creating proper atmosphere that would lead to utmost justice. This, in turn, would enable every claimant to regain his rights in due time.

The government will start to employ modern technologies, develop administrative work in courts and existing justice departments and to closely pursue the construction of the justice palace in order to be a beacon of rights and a monument of justice. In addition, the government will provide the means of knowledge to judges through scholarships and scientific courses as well as newsletters, periodicals and the specialised library which the Ministry of Justice is planning to establish. The government will work on founding clubs for judges in order to provide the judicial system to meet and stay in close contact in social, cultural and scientific contexts.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Wednesday presents the government's policy statement to the Lower House of Parliament (Petra photo)

Your excellency Mr. Speaker, Distinguished deputies,

The responsibility of safeguarding Jordan and Jordanians puts us all before the duty of raising efficiency of our valiant armed forces enabling them to implement the plans of reorganisation, providing them with all their needs, and reequipping them with arms necessary for realising their national, pan-national, and human role.

This role, that Jordanians constantly cherished and shouldered since the days when our grandfathers led the Great Arab Revolt army to defend the freedom, unity, and independence of the nation.

We believe that the role of our armed forces at this stage, when the region and the world are afflicted with concerns and turmoil, makes it imperative for us to support them in order to maintain the highest standards of vigilance, competence, and to able them to perform their duty to the fullest.

As for the security apparatus, working on the security of the citizens and the country, which comprises the Public Security Department, the General Intelligence, and the Civil Defence

Department, the government will provide them with all their means to moderate, train and raise efficiency in order to be able to achieve stability and to spread security among citizens and to guarantee the people's right to live in a society where freedom, equality and the supremacy of law are dominant.

The government will do its best to expand the frames of safe-guarding public safety, and will be strict in protecting the lives and properties of people.

It will also adopt steps that guarantee this achievement starting with modifying the traffic law and continuing with the implementation of procedures to protect people on the roads.

Your excellency Mr. Speaker, Distinguished deputies,

The role undertaken by the institutions entrusted with education, culture, information, youth and social work, in building up the personality of the citizen and strengthening his presence and in shaping our process of change towards finalising the establishment of the state of institutions and promoting the democratic approach, all of this requires that these institutions should be based on national commitment

and enlightened by the pan-Arab dimension and inspired by the Islamic values with a clear perspective on the horizons of humanitarian openness.

Within this context, the government would spare no effort in defending the Arab Islamic culture and enhancing its presence. The government would also support intellectual activities aimed at creating harmony and balance between our honourable past, which we are proud of, and our future we are moving towards with full confidence and optimism. Our intellectual movement should be able to reflect the spirit of the new era and respond in its requirements and challenges. Thus, we are now examining the best means to achieve cooperation and coordination between these national institutions with an effective mechanism and framework.

Therefore, in the field of education, the government will concentrate on accelerating the implementation of the projects of the second phase of the educational development plan which extends to the year 2000 and gives priority to the infrastructural development of the educational system with special emphasis on the qualitative aspects of the educational process in a way that provides our students with a balanced education, taking into account their mental, physical, spiritual, social and vocational needs.

As for higher education, the government is embarking on developing a clear policy based on supporting the independence of universities and on balancing the higher education outputs with the labour market requirements through reconsidering the admission policy, upgrading performance, modernising scientific research programmes, creating a new system for accrediting higher education institutions and for graduates assessment, and laying down the necessary bases to tackle the problem of funding the universities which receive financial support from the general budget.

In the field of culture, my government will tend to deepen our contemporary national and pan-Arab discourse content and means of fulfilling its objectives

(Continued on page 7)

THE MANY FACES OF INDIA

A COUNTRY so vast, India represents diversity in all its forms: people, religions, customs and traditions, clothes, dialects and habits. It begins with the highest peaks and descends across steep slopes and rolling plains to submerge in not one but three seas. Beaches surround her coasts and in Rajasthan there is the stillness of the Thar desert. The great seas, a still desert, the might of the Himalayas... India has all this and more. Backwater canals and tropical forests, rugged hill towns, river estuaries, wooded swamps and glacial meadows. Regions unexplored. The savagery of city dwellers contrasts sharply with aboriginal tribes who still lead their sheltered existence unhindered by the spread of civilisation.

Behind the veil of diversity lies a vibrant India, united by a common "Indianness," which thrives on the diversity and sustains it at the same time. The transcendent Indian culture has for ages inspired a collective national consciousness, which gives every Indian a sense of belonging to a single ethical, social entity. To the Indian, the country is a harmonious whole which he does not question. To the foreigner, the diversity is a puzzling complexity which he seeks to unravel.

One of the world's oldest civilisations, India of today has flowered with a kaleidoscopic variety and a rich cultural heritage. During the forty-seven years of independence, it has achieved multi-faceted socio-economic progress which, in turn, has

helped sustain its age-old traditions.

The past lives on in India's continuity. There is no nostalgia for what was, no impatient anticipation for what will be. For the philosophy of the land dictates that to live for the moment is to share the spiritual joy of belonging. The people of India are largely descendants of immigrants from across the Himalayas who invaded the country, also known as the "Golden Bird" due to its rich resources. These invaders came at various points in history to produce not just the Indian race but also the multi-dimensional Indian culture. Each new conqueror ended up conquering the hearts of the masses by adding their traditions and cultures to the Indian ensemble.

The first records of history trace back to the great 5000-year-old Indus Valley civilisation on the banks of the River Indus, where many planned cities have been excavated. The restless Aryans who came to the subcontinent around 2000 B.C., became the inhabitants of the country pushing the Dravidians towards the southern tip of India. The Dravidians, however, intermingled with the Sanskrit-speaking invaders. The result was the Indian race, the numerous Indian languages, the variety of gods of the Hindu pantheon. And so it continues today.

The unfolding of history saw the invasion of Alexander of Macedonia, establishment of the Mauryan Dynasty in 332 B.C., the Kushan Empire and the subsequent Gupta Dynasty, when India

reached the pinnacle of her glory. Hailed as the "Golden Age," the spirit of learning spread during this period across the length and breadth of the country. In southern India, the Chola, Pandya and Chera dynasties flourished, before paving the way for the Chalukyas and Pallavas to establish their domination.

Islam found its way into India in the 8th century A.D. Muslim conquerors came to the country and settled down. Subsequently, the Maghals established a mighty empire. So recent was their reign that monuments of that period are virtually intact. Islam today, has the second biggest following in the country next to Hinduism, the religion of the Aryans and the fusion of Arabic and Hindi has given birth to Urdu, a delicate, refined language.

The cultural synthesis which was the hallmark of Indian history since ancient period, reached its zenith during the mediaeval times, when the concept of "Ganga-Jamuna" or intermingled styles and traditions took shape.

The mediaeval era which has dotted the landscape with the beautiful gardens, forts and the Taj Mahal and bred dance, music and literature that ties India with the Mideast, stands testimony to the impact of religious tolerance on cultural enhancement. The Mughal rule flowered during the time of Akbar, who stood for religious tolerance, and decayed with fundamentalists taking over during the reign of Aurangzeb.

Then came the British — first as a commercial and then

Every dance form in India has its own idiom of emotional expressions.

as a political body. For the first time in its history, India was united in a bid to oust foreign dominance. When battles proved worthless, leaders of the stature of Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Gandhi

and Nehru rose from the ranks. And India regained its independence to become a democratic nation.

Western culture came to

the country in the 19th century with the British. The impact of the modern Western culture soon gave birth to a new awakening in India, exposing the traditional Indian society to scientific Western thinking.

Souvenirs of its glorious past still survive in India. Edicts and stupas from the Mauryan age; the rock temples and mural paintings of Ajanta and Ellora from the Gupta age; the magnificent heritage of Chola and Pallava kings; the striking 13th century Sun Temple at Konark; the traditions of architecture left behind by the Muslim rulers in Delhi, Mandu, Golkonda, Ahmedabad and Bijapur; the great palaces of the Mughals — the Red Fort, Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri; the imperial extravagance of the



Indian literature, music and dance. In a country with 16 official languages and over 2,000 dialects, literature has flourished in various languages. Each language and dialect has produced its own literature of great vitality and richness. Though distinctive in parts, all stand for a homogenous culture that forms their essence.

There are two systems of music — the Hindustani in the north and Carnatic in the south. Though the two systems differ considerably in their approaches, the basic emphasis on linear movement of notes and melody is typically Indian.

Kathak of north India, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali of the south, Odissi of the east and Manipuri from the northeast are some of the classical dance schools, each having numerous styles or Gharanas. These are supplemented by folk and tribal dances and regional music representing the aspirations and thoughts of the local people.

All the traditions together contribute to the total picture — an India that unites and inspires its inhabitants and lures the outsider with its variety as well as its ethnicity and typical Indianness. The diversity mesmerises and the oneness provides the key to understand the people and their customs — modern and traditional, diverse yet similar — existing in a common timeframe.

Raj with the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, their great universities and the initiation into the industrial age which resulted in the railways, posts and telegraphs and an organised, central administrative machinery.

This history continues to live in India. Religion and culture combine with education to give the Indian a background that other nations envy. And in the tradition of excellence, India now builds great universities, atomic power plants, factories, hydraulic projects and dams... "the temples of modern India," as Nehru called them.

The element of diversity also has its reflections in the

ASCOTEL Δ

ON THE OCCASION OF THE REPUBLIC DAY ON INDIA

WISHES THE INDIAN PEOPLE, THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA

PROGRESS, DEVELOPMENT, PROSPERITY AND SUCCESS

WE WILL ALWAYS WORK HAND IN HAND

TO BRING ABOUT A RAPIDLY GROWING INDIAN

JORDANIAN CO-OPERATION FOR THE BEST OF THE INTEREST OF BOTH PEOPLE

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With best wishes from
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on this great occasion.

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On the occasion of the Republic Day of India

Kawar Drug Store
conveys its hearty greeting to the government and Indian people

On the occasion of the Republic Day of India

Dr. Naser Al Maaitah, director of Zarqa University Services Est.
conveys his hearty greeting to the government and Indian people.

On the occasion of the Republic Day of India

Indo-Jordan Scholars Club
conveys its hearty greeting to the government and Indian people



JORDAN FERTILIZER INDUSTRY COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Jordan Phosphate Mines Company



Arab Potash Company

WISH

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A HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY
AFFIRMING JORDANIAN FRIENDSHIP
AND HOPES OF CONTINUED
PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY**



**Hijazi and Ghosheh,
Industrial, Agricultural and Trading Group**

Offers its congratulations to the president, government and friendly people of India on the occasion of

India's Republic Day

and wishes the Indian nation continued progress and prosperity.

General Manager Issam Hijazi.



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**CONGRATULATIONS
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felicitations to the
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THE REPUBLIC

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Government presents policy

(Continued from page 1)

the path of the building of the state of law, strengthening democracy, achieving social justice and reform.

The prime minister said Jordan emerged from the "challenges that were imposed on it" with its dignity maintained and its rights in land and water restored.

In another reference to the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel, Sharif Zeid said the government considers the second a link in the chain of achieving peace in the Middle East, stressing the Kingdom's commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement with Israel on the basis of recovering all occupied Arab lands and in implementation of U.N. resolutions 242, 338 and 425.

He said the government will continue its bilateral and trilateral negotiations with Israel to guarantee the conclusion of agreements that would ensure the attainment of the Kingdom's and the Arab Nation's goals and interests.

The prime minister reiterated Jordan's support for the Palestinian people and their right to achieve statehood on their national soil with Jerusalem as their capital.

"The government will continue to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and (intends to) establish solid and comprehensive ties with the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in accordance with a clear vision that realises the national interests of the two brotherly people," Sharif Zeid told legislators before leaving the House to receive PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Improving relations with Arab countries will also be a priority for the government, Sharif Zeid said, adding the requirements of the new era make it impossible for the country to be isolated from its Arab and Muslim depth.

"My government stresses its concern with achieving Arab solidarity, and will work to build strong relations... predicated on confidence and mutual respect

...and will seek the highest degree of coordination in the political, economic, social and cultural fields" with Arab countries, said Sharif Zeid, adding the government will also pursue the reactivation of joint Arab institutions, mainly the Arab League.

In the only reference to Iraq in the statement, Sharif Zeid said the government, in cooperation with other friendly countries, will continue its efforts to end the suffering of the Iraqi people and lift the economic embargo imposed on them.

The prime minister also stressed the importance of developing relations with all members of the international community, especially Islamic countries, adding that Jordan will stand by the Muslim people in Bosnia-Herzegovina and work towards the ending of the suffering of the Chechen people.

The government, said Sharif Zeid, will strengthen the feelings of belonging to the Arab and Muslim culture by highlighting the complementarity between Arabism and Islam. He said the government will encourage the spread of the Muslim culture and support the message of the mosque.

Addressing the role of the official media, the prime minister said the government will have as one of its priorities the modernisation of the media so that they will be close to the problems of the people and will help consolidate the democratic practice through credible coverage of events.

Sharif Zeid said the government will also review legislation governing the operation of the press in the country in consultation with the press association and experts.

"The government is committed to guaranteeing the freedom of the press that was ensured by the Constitution and in accordance with... the National Charter," the prime minister stressed.

He said the government is counting on the review of the draft law for the Jordan Press Association, which is now with the House, to strengthen

the role of the union in organising the journalism profession and guaranteeing the freedom of the press "within the moral and national responsibility, the conditions of honesty and credibility... and tolerance and supporting the democratic orientation in consistency with the Constitution."

Stressing the urgency with which the government sees the necessity of developing the national economy, the prime minister said the government will proceed with the reform programme, encourage the private sector, improve the investment environment and seek cooperation with the Arab countries, the PNA, and international groups such as the European Union.

He said the government will also work to develop educational institutions so that they will be able to meet the requirements of the new era, and will review school curricula and encourage vocational training.

The policy statement addressed other domestic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, social legislation, women's rights, services provided to citizens and pensions for retired army and civil service personnel among others.

"As my government presents the House with this policy statement and asks for your confidence on its basis, we hope that your debates will enrich the plans and projects included in it and that cooperation is achieved for the good of our country, people and nation under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein," Sharif Zeid told lawmakers.

Vote after debate

The House is expected to take two to three days in discussing the policy statement and indications are that the government will emerge from the confidence session with a strong parliamentary mandate though it will be subjected to tough criticism from opposition deputies.

Observers say the government will secure 54 to 56

votes of confidence in the 80-member House since it has the support of most members of four parliamentary blocs as well as the majority of independent lawmakers.

Withholding confidence will be the 17-member Islamic Action Front, the only bloc excluded from the government, and leftist deputies Bassam Haddadin (Zarqa), Khalil Haddadin (Amman), Mustafar Shneikat (Balqa), Toujan Faisal (Amman) as well as Deputy Talal Obeidat (Irbid).

Joining the opposition deputies in criticising the government will be lawmakers who are unhappy with their exclusion from the ministerial team.

Ahmad Qudah (Ajloun) highlighted this unhappiness among such deputies in a recent speech when he subjected the government to the harshest criticism yet for not having Ajloun (50 kilometres from Amman) represented in the Cabinet.

Parliamentary sources said Dr. Qudah could be joined by two to three deputies, including Deputy Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh (Madaba), in withholding confidence from the government in an expression of discontent about keeping them or their constituencies out of the Cabinet.

Dr. Shakhaneh told the Jordan Times Wednesday that it is "very likely" that he will withhold confidence from the government because the "ministerial team is not an able one."

Parliamentary sources say opposition members will use the confidence session as an opportunity to air their views about the peace treaty and alleged encroachment on their freedom of expression.

But supporters of the government will not allow the opposition to win the day, observers say. Therefore, they too will deliver speeches to counter the opposition's allegations and defend the government's position, especially on the peace treaty whose advantages they will try to spell out.

Sharif Zeid's cabinet is the fifth government to seek the confidence of the House since the parliamentary elections of 1989.

King, Arafat discuss bilateral ties

(Continued from page 1)

by the King to El Areeesh on Egypt's border with the Gaza Strip, the Jordan News Agency, Petra said.

The two leaders later started expanded talks over a working dinner with senior officials from both sides attending at the Raghdan Palace.

Petra said the King reaffirmed Jordan's continued support for the Palestinian people until they achieve their rights to their national soil and underlined the necessity to strengthen inter-Arab relations based on clarity and honesty.

"The King also reiterated that Jordan would continue its role in safeguarding the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem as it has done before based on its keenness to protect the interest of the (Arab and Muslim) Nation," Petra said.

"Jordan has no ambition other than to preserve the shrines and their Islamic and Arab identity," Petra quoted the King as saying.

In brief comments upon arrival at Marja airport, Mr. Arafat, on his first visit to Jordan since May, gave little clue to his approach to a "memorandum of understanding and cooperation" and six protocols that were drafted by a joint committee over the past two days.

The PLO leader would only say that he needed to "study the accords," but stressed that both Jordan and the Palestinians had a "common goal to achieve solidarity and heal inter-Arab differences."

The "memorandum" and protocols, which set out a framework for Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation in banking and monetary affairs, education, trade, transport and telecommunications, are expected to be signed by Mr. Arafat on Thursday before he leaves Jordan.

The PLO leader visited Jordan in May and several reported plans to come here after he moved to the Gaza Strip in July were called off as he refused to sign an economic accord negotiated in

January 1994.

Relations were further strained over Jerusalem after Israel acknowledged Jordan's "special" role in Islamic shrines in the Holy City in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26.

According to Jordanian officials, the way for an Arafat visit was cleared when the two sides reached an understanding over the sensitive question of Jordan's role in the Islamic shrines in Arab East Jerusalem based on the Kingdom's support for Palestinian claims to sovereignty over the holy city as part of the territories occupied in 1967.

The officials said that Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, in talks with Arafat at the Moroccan resort of Marrakech on the fringes of a meeting of the Jerusalem Committee this month, had assured the PLO leader that Jordan "has no hidden intentions" in Jerusalem or the rest of the occupied territories and that the Kingdom would hand over custody of the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem as and when the Palestinians gain sovereignty over the Holy City.

But at the airport, the Palestinian leader appeared to cast doubt whether the contentious issue of East Jerusalem was resolved.

In answer to a question on whether Jordan and the PLO had reached a formula over the Jordanian role in the holy sites in Jerusalem, Mr. Arafat replied: "We have not reached that (formula) yet."

The PLO views the Israeli recognition of Jordan's role in Jerusalem as undermining the Palestinians' quest to regain the city that they see as the capital of a future independent state. PLO leaders refused to accept the Jordanian argument that the Kingdom relinquishing its role in Jerusalem at this point in time would only allow Israel to advance its quest to obliterate the Arab and Islamic character of Jerusalem in the absence of a Palestinian authority to fill the vacuum.

Observers said Mr. Arafat's comments in Amman on

Wednesday could mean that he was holding for more in other areas of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation.

The draft documents commit Jordan and the PNA to formulate a joint strategy that involves close and constant coordination in the Middle East peace process and cooperation in all fields.

The memorandum of understanding, or the preamble of the document, is based on mutual acceptance and support for each others' negotiations and agreements with Israel, which each side initially criticised.

The accord contains a Jordanian commitment to support the implementation of the Israel-PLO declaration of principles and the Palestinian quest for an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. This is reciprocated by Palestinian support of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty, describing it as "an important step" towards the restoration of Jordanian rights.

Jordanian officials interpreted the Palestinian acceptance of the Jordan-Israeli accord as meaning that the PNA "acknowledges Jordanian custodianship of the holy shrines in Jerusalem."

The Jordanian side to the talks included His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Ousein, the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, Deputy Prime Minister Khaled Al Karaki, Foreign Minister Kabariti and Interior Minister Salameh Hammud.

On the Palestinian side, the talks were attended by PNA cabinet members Yasser Abed Rabbo, Yasser Amer, Ahmad Qourie, Abdul Aziz Al Haj Ahmad, Jamil Tarif, and Abdul Hafez Ashhab, PLO acting ambassador to Jordan Omar Khatib, and Hakim Balawi, a key Palestinian security official.

Kabariti deplures Tel Aviv bombing

(Continued from page 1)

Kabariti deplured these developments which, he said, were aimed at undermining the peace process.

"Terrorism, violence and counterterrorism must not be allowed to hinder the peace process or undermine serious efforts towards achieving real progress in the ongoing negotiations on all tracks," Mr. Kabariti told the Jordan Times.

Responding to a question, the minister said that "one cannot but condemn this cycle of violence and killings no matter what the motives or justifications were." He stressed that "reaction to such acts must not serve the aim of those who do not want the region to reach a state of just and comprehensive peace."

He added that "the best response is to proceed ahead in the peace process so that we can achieve positive de-

velopments that reflect on the lives of the people in the region and open the way for progress and growth."

On Jordan's position vis-à-vis the controversy over the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Mr. Kabariti said Jordan's position was clear in the framework of the U.N. General Assembly in terms of rejecting the use of nuclear weapons and the threat of using such weapons. He said this position calls for a total removal of these arms and all weapons of mass destruction.

He pointed out that Jordan had succeeded in including a clause in its peace treaty with Israel for working towards "the creation of a Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction, both conventional and non-conventional."

Indian films make their mark

Mustafa Ali is a taxi driver in New York City who has no clue where India is, but Hindi films and songs are his favourite. Ali, an Egyptian, is not the only one of his kind. There are thousands of avid watchers of Indian movies across the African continent, South Asia, South East Asia, Middle East and Russia. "Though I don't know much about India's politics, I love its films and Amitabh Bachchan is my favourite," says Harry Mozalious of Ghana.

Indian films, especially Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam and Bengali, have become the country's ambassadors of goodwill crossing over political barriers. In fact, in the early 60's, Actor Director, Raj Kapoor was more popular than even politicians in Eastern Europe. "Mera Joota Hai Japani..." and "Awara Hoon..." were two songs which are still popular in Russia and China.

Hindi films are also very

popular in neighbouring Pakistan, where these films are seen on pirated video cassettes. Their popularity even rose to greater heights after the completion of an Indo-Pak venture, "Henna" which starred Zeba Bakhtiar, a Pakistani actress.

India's film industry is the largest in the world, releasing nearly 1000 movies a year. Most of these films are produced in Bombay, commonly called Bollywood, and Madras.

Though Hindi films occupy the prime spot, of late its production scale has shown a downward trend. In 1991, 215 Hindi films were produced. In 1990 it climbed down to 200 and in 1992 only 189 Hindi films were made. Language-wise, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu, still occupy the top three slots with a total of 189, 180 and 153 films respectively in 1992. One of the main reasons for the fall in the making of films seemed to be the invasion of satellite

television and cable TV. Indian cinema is today eighty-two years old. Since the first ever Indian film, "Raja Harish Chandra" hit the screen on May 3, 1913, since then cinema has been extremely popular.

Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Ritwik Ghatak are the torch-bearers of the 'new-wave' cinema in India. The crowning glory for Indian cinema was the Oscar awarded to Satyajit Ray for

his contribution to the art form.

Mrinal Sen experiments with new wave as well as fantasy. His well-known films include Bhuvan Shome, Chorus, Mrigaya and Akaler Sandhane. Ritwik Ghatak's films bore trauma of change in a man's world. The Hindi film industry also saw films from the 'New Cinema Group'. These include Basu Chatterjee's Sara Akash, Shyam Benegal's Manthan,

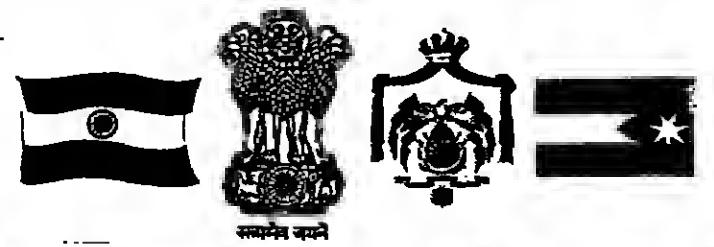
Nishant, Kalyug and Trikal. Quality films have emerged from the South with the advent of Directors like K. Balachander, Jayakanthan, John Abraham, Adoor Gopalakrishna, Aravindan and Mani Ratnam, whose recent movie 'Raja' in Tamil (later dubbed in Hindi) was a superb hit. The film is about the kidnapping of a scientist by Kashmiri militants and his wife's efforts to secure his release. The songs of the film

have also become overwhelmingly popular both at home and abroad, with the Music Director, 16-year-old A.R. Rahman winning the national

award. With several countries hosting retrospectives of eminent Indian film-makers, people abroad are now get-

ting exposed to quality films as well as wholesome entertainment movies. Indian films have certainly come of age.

Felicitations and best wishes to India and her people on its Republic Day
with best compliments from
Moh'd S. Al Kalash and Naim E. Zaghloul



ON THE OCCASION OF THE
REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA



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Computers arabisation: A continuous challenge

By Jean-Claude Elias

Computer arabisation has already been the subject of this column two times since 1993. Today, our intention is not to talk about or analyse any technical point regarding arabisation but rather to re-examine its global importance.

Arabisation is the possibility to use programmes in Arabic, eventually in conjunction with other languages. The celebrated Nafitha arabisation system, that is also one of the earliest in the history of PCs, allows users to work in Arabic, using standard software, not necessarily designed with the Arabic language in mind. The well-known dBase programme for example was initially developed to run in English, or any other Latin-alphabet-based language. Once Nafitha is installed however, one can enter and process Arabic data with dBase. Naturally the commands and menus remain in English. Though widely implemented, Nafitha has inherent weaknesses.

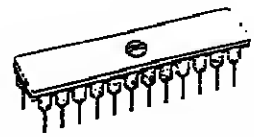
Then came the arabisation of Microsoft Windows. Ironically, Nafitha is the Arabic word for "window". It is certainly just a coincidence. Microsoft started by arabising the main Windows operating system and then took on arabising the different programmes that one would usually like to have on top of Windows: Excel spreadsheet, MS-Word word processor and Access data base. The obvious advantage compared with Nafitha is that the programmes are meant to work in Arabic and are not just adapted. No feature is removed from the English original work.

The effort it takes to release a bilingual (Arabic/English) version of each of these packages is huge. Only system analysts and software developers have a good idea of what it takes to do that. Also every time a new English version is released, Excel 4.0, 5.0, etc., the equivalent bilingual must be prepared.

Earlier this week a team of Microsoft experts gave a lecture-seminar in one of Amman's hotels to a large group of graciously invited guests, introducing the company's fully arabised "Microsoft Office" package that includes Excel, Word, Access, PowerPoint and Mail. The team is currently touring the Middle East and making presentations at the rhythm of one country a day.

With its amazing success record, it makes no doubt

chip talk



in everybody's mind that Microsoft is a business conscious company. Which brings the obvious question: Is the market for Arabic software worth all the trouble? Knowing Microsoft one should answer yes, even before starting any situation analysis. The total population in the Arab countries is approximately 250 millions. Some factors contribute to reduce the market size: Computer literacy in Yemen for instance is much lower than in Jordan and some PC users in Arab countries work in English only. Other factors on the contrary contribute to increase the market size: Arabic is not only used in the Arab countries. On average, these factors counter balance and the final market size may be considered as 250 millions.

A negative factor, that has nothing to do with market size is wide spread usage of software piracy in the Arab countries. One must however acknowledge that many of these countries have recently implemented copyright laws and have actually started enforcing them: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, for example.

So, are Microsoft efforts rewarding, financially and directly speaking? Only the company can tell. Our guess however is a strong "yes". While Nafitha was designed in Bahrain, by "OI Systems", an Arab company, Microsoft is a U.S. corporation and its arabisation team is based in Redmond, WA. It is certain that they consider the Arab market as very important, if not for now then for the future. One thing is sure: Without the Arabic-English versions of Word and Excel they have become accustomed to, millions of users from Abu Dhabi to Morocco wouldn't see the world through the same eyes.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

TANTALIZING FACTS

★ In Seattle, the capital of Washington state, there is a special museum where different equipment for grilling the bread are displayed.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Sons of a Tanzanian tribe believe that an exchange of spitting on one another is a sign of expressing respect and good intention. Therefore, expectoration has become their custom whenever they meet or see themselves off.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ An American company produces some kind of biscuit for children who dislike using a brush and toothpaste. The new product refreshes and cleans the mouth and teeth.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ In Darwin, Australia, an annual race is held between boats which are totally made of empty cans of beer.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ In Atlanta, USA, there is also a museum which is completely provided with everything related to Mitchel novel *Gone With The Wind*.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

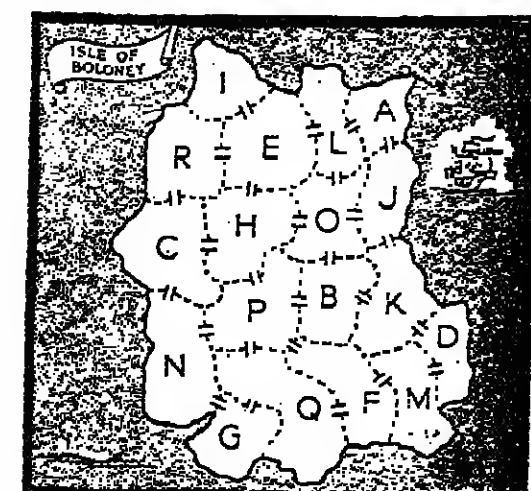
— Do you like fruit? Hal tohibbo al-fakiha?
— Yes, I do. It's very useful for our bodies as it's rich in vitamins.
Na'am ohibbaha. Innaha mufeedaton le-ajsamina wa ghaniyatun bil-vitaminat.
— What about having some fruit juice?
Ma ra'yoka fee tanawul baadan min asiril fakiha?
— Why not? I'd like a glass of orange juice, please.
Walaina la? Oreedo kooban min asiril burraqal, min fadlik.

— What fruit do you like to eat?
Mal fakiha allati tohibbo ann ta'kolaha?
— Bananas, grapes, peaches and figs.
Al mawz, al inab, al khokh, wat-teen.
— Are fruit prices high?
Hal as'aarul fakiha murtafi'a?
— No, they are reasonable. La, innaha ma'qula.
— Does Jordan produce mangoes?
Hal yontij al-Ordun al-manja?
— No, we import it from Egypt and India.
La, fanashnu nastawridaha min Misr wal Hind.
— Do you like eating jam at breakfast?
Hal tohibbo ann ta'kola al-murabba indal iftar?
— Yes, and also apricot and strawberry.
Na'am, wakazalika murabba al-mishmash wal-farawla.
— Do you grow fruit in your garden?
Hal taz'ra'oonal fakiha fee hadeekatikom?
— Yes, we grow tangerines, pears, plums, almonds, quinces, pomegranates, dates and cherries.
Na'am, fanashnu naz'ra yusif afandi, kummathra (jass), barquq, lawz, safarjal, rumman, balab wa karaz.

TIME FOR FUN

★ An idle man knocked at a door asked the housewife for something to eat.

"Well, I'll give you some food on condition that



you mow the lawn in my garden first," the woman said.

"My fair lady, I've come here to ask for help not for bartering," the man replied.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Two French were talking together in a bar.

THE FIRST: "Do you speak German?"

THE SECOND: "Yes, of course."

THE FIRST: "Then, say some German words so that I may learn."

THE SECOND: "Volks Vagen", came the reply.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ It's universally acknowledged that fishermen and hook-fishing fans are less talkative than others.

Once two of them went fishing. Each hurled his hook. Two hours passed without uttering even one word or making the least movement. But it happened that one of them moved and lifted his leg at that moment.

"Listen man, this is the second time you move your leg within four hours. Tell me, for goodness sake, whether you came here to catch fish or to dance!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What is another name for Ireland?
2. What is the longest tunnel in the world?
3. What is a maypole?
4. What do we mean by "deuce" in lawn tennis?
5. What do we call a pile of stones used as a mark or memorial?
6. What is the crookedest railway in the world?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PERPLEXITIES

GRAND TOUR

The Isle of Boloney has 18 districts and an interior passport system. Any person entering any one district has to surrender the visa for that district on leaving it and may not re-enter until a new one has been obtained.

The Inspector of Consciences has been ordered to visit each of the 18 districts in one tour.

Can you plan a route for him whereby each of the districts is visited once only?

The irrepressible impulse

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

The belief that there is a serious malaise at the very heart of literature is not new. The arts have been failing for ever, with poetry, drama and now fiction dropping off the bough. Novels are nowhere as good as they used to be 10 years ago, 50 years ago, 100 years ago. Maybe, in fact, the form is dying at last, as so many have predicted — passing, perhaps, into the hands of disappointed politicians, stand-up comedians or catwalk models, or disappearing entirely off the page and into the screen.

Nothing stimulates literary discussion more than a sound sense of malaise, and malaise has been around for some time now. I am an academic, and it is well-known in academic literary circles there are many theories. It was in the sixties that these theories began to acquire an ever-increasing sense of morbidity. First there was Post-Modernism: the theory of "the literature of exhaustion," where everything was a quotation from everything else. Then after Post-Modernism came Post-Mortemism. This took the form of the Theory of the Death of the Subject, the Theory of the Death of the Author, and the Theory of the Death of the Book where a screen-based

global village replaces the print-based culture.

But anyone who moves in literary circles, or has simply heard a literary critic speak, will know the power of these theories. You have only to go to the subject catalogue of any library to see the long list of books on the Death of the Subject. The Author books of any bookshop display to us what a vast number of authors have written on the Death of the Author. And both the libraries and the bookstores are filled with books dealing with the Death of the Book.

But, even in the age of ever-multiplying imagery, the word has not died, and the book has not disappeared. Someone once said that if the match had been invented after the cigarette lighter, people would have called it an improvement. The same is surely true of the book, which may have changed but shows every sign of surviving the technological revolution. The movies may be fine, and interactive TV a human blessing. But the book, which you can slip into your pocket, mark up, rattle through back and forth, throw over your shoulder, read on the beach or in the bath, tear, wipe up with, go back to, or store elegantly, is still with us. And so is the serious novel and the serious author.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 26

7:30 N.B.A.

8:30 Road To Avonlea

Felicity's first crush has a hilarious result as she defies her parents to meet with her young man.

9:10 The Hat Squad

When two policemen and a star witness are killed, the Hat Squad traces the murders of two brothers who are professional hit men.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Havana

Starring: Robert Redford & Lena Olin

The film tells the exciting story of an American gambler and his heroic role in freeing an anti-government leader during the Cuban revolution.

12:00 The Exile

A girl is apprehended by the French police and asked to cooperate with them during their attempt to track down a gang dealing with drugs.

Friday, Jan. 27

7:30 Movies, Games And Videos

8:00 African Skies

A sabotaged pipe is blown up causing a toxic spill, while Rory and Jam are combining their talents to form Club Rory and organise a costume party at the St. Regis Academy.

8:30 Desmond's

Owner Desmond Ambrose is a self-taught barber who knows only one style — short-back-and-sides. Born in Guyana, he still dreams of going back there to retire.

9:00 P.M. Magazine

9:30 Heart Of Courage

10:00 News In English

10:20 Blanche

At last, Blanche's true passion for Clauvis translates into a complete and happy marriage.

12:00 Never The Twain

Simon's fear of riding aeroplanes turns to a hilarious scene when he and Oliver decide to travel to Vancouver.

Saturday, Jan. 28

7:30 Harry And The Hendersons

8:00 Documentary — Innovation

The programme looks at the outer space and several attempts to explore other forms of civilisation.

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:15 Murder She Wrote

Murders occur as people fall foul over a valuable silver coin that has been previously stolen.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Country

Starring: Jessica Lange & Sam Shepard

The film tells the story of the Ivys, a farm family deeply rooted to the soil around them. So when the government bureaucrats decide to take it all away, there's only one decision the family can make... they are staying.

12:00 Major Dad

Sunday, Jan. 29

7:30 Galactica

8:15 The Nanny

8:45 The Album Show

9:30 Heartbeat

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Blind Spot

Starring: Joanne Woodward & Laura Linney

The film tells the tragic story of a woman who is a cocaine addict and her mother's incredible battle to save her out of this deadly spot.

12:00 The Hidden Room

A woman recalls a past incident in which she had saved her mother from committing suicide.

Monday, Jan. 30

7:30 Boogies Diner

8:00 Black Beauty

8:30 Street Hawk

An attempt to substitute a detained prisoner, who is charged with a \$20 million robbery, with another, while being transported to the jailhouse.

9:15 Shades Of L.A.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Louisiana

Through the Paris uprising and the civil war, Virginia's world falls apart. She fights to keep and resurrect Bagatelle. But, her struggle has only just begun...

Tuesday, Jan. 31

7:30 Documentary — Practical Guide To The Universe

The programme looks at our planet Earth and tries to trace back the different stages it has gone through since the beginning of creation.

8:00 You Bet Your Life

8:30 Road To Avonlea

Young cannery worker, Gus Pike, struggles to overcome his illiteracy with the help of Hetty King.

9:10 Documentary — Equinox

The programme looks at whether genetic engineers could reconstruct living, breathing dinosaurs that might once more walk on Earth. It follows each scientific step needed to create jurassic park.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Wild Palms

Virtual Reality

Harry could never feel how much he loves his wife until he loses her completely after being strangled by her mother.

12:00 The Piglet Files

Wednesday, Feb. 1

7:30 Ramadan In The World

7:45 Charlie Chaplain

8:00 Law And Order

9:10 The Cinder Path

10:00 News In English

10:40 Snowy River

12:00 Feature Film — Papillon

Starring: Steve McQueen & Dustin Hoffman

ANSWERS BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Erin.
2. The Simplon tunnel. 12 1/4 miles long, on the route connecting Switzerland with Italy.
3. A tall, decorated pole around which villagers and children dance on May Day.
4. When both sides are level with three points all.
5. A cairn.
6. The Mount Tamalpais Scenic Railway in California.

PERPLEXITIES

Here is one solution:

L A J K D M F Q G N P B O H C R E I

Prime Minister says improving the economy, addressing unemployment, modernising legislation and maintaining security are top priorities

Government will work to achieve better ties with Arab countries

Jordanian-Palestinian relations should be based on a clear vision for benefit of two peoples

(Continued from page 6)

and at the same time to highlight the complementary and inseparable relationship between its two components, Arabism and Islam. In this respect, the government will make use of the available potentials to support cultural and art societies, unions and forums to serve their members and empower their roles in depending on the sense of national and pan-Arab belonging.

These potentials will also be used to set up cultural departments in the new governorate centres, open branches of the national library in the governorate cities and to bolster cooperation and contact between our cultural institutions and their counterparts in the Arab World with a view to strengthening the citizen's confidence in his nation and future.

My government is keen on doing its best to implement the letter of appointment's directives regarding culture including guaranteeing freedom of creativity, making creative people in art and literary areas through offering them job opportunities and assisting them in attaining all resources of human culture.

If the role of educational and cultural institutions is to create comprehensive awareness and the role of universities is to be centres of research and enlightenment and an image of academic freedom in research and thinking then the role of information should be one that represents the entire homeland.

In this new climate of change, evaluating and modernising the official media institutions and their performance, is one of this government's priorities. The media will touch upon people's concerns, depending their practice of democracy. It will also stimulate dialogue among them and provide an atmosphere of constructive criticism and attachment between the people and officials, and support every national effort, and will open wider spaces for citizens to look into what is going on in the world as a means of progress and changing circumstances, with accurate and scientific news credibility.

We are proud that the umbrella of the Jordanian electronic media reflect the image of our country and its national voice to the world. Through the Arab Jordanian press channel and radio, my government will work to have the satellite transmission reach all parts of the world in the near future.

As for the press, the government is keen on securing its freedom which is guaranteed by the constitution, and in the same image drawn and defined by the national charter. The government will coordinate with the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) and cooperate with a group of experts to review all legislation related to journalism. The government hopes that through your honourable House, discussion of the temporary law, will bolster the role of the association in organising the profession and securing the freedom of the press in the context of national and moral responsibility, and in accordance with the terms of integrity, honesty of speech, tolerance, and support for constitutional democracy.

In the field of youth, the government is concerned with investing in their active potentials and aspirations and providing them with all means necessary to continue upgrading them in accordance with the solid bases founded on the faith in God and belonging to the world with a sense of responsibility to raise a strong youth in terms of faith, morals and personality, aware of the heritage and role of their nation in human civilisation and proud of their history the wise Hashemite leadership.

To achieve this, the government will continue to work on the infrastructure of all youth and sports activities, building youth homes, sport complexes and centres to serve this sector in various parts of the Kingdom. The government also continues supporting the sport unions and sport clubs financially, to enable them to undertake their role in serving the sport movement and organising local and international sports events to develop and activate sports to reach the standards that our country deserves. The government will work to activate the role of sports and youth leaders centres so as to be a regional Olympic centre, well-prepared to receive and train Arab nationals.

The government will also resume the issuance of the education periodicals and expand the opening channels to maintain contacts between our youth inside and outside the country.

The government will attach special attention to the voluntary work and the activation of the role of youth centres in this regard. In addition to that, the government will enhance the role of boys and girls scouts and conduct Al Hussein camps for construction to work in different places and specific seasons.

The approval of the government will enable the government to realise these aspirations and provide a fixed income to support these activities, through establishing a fund for supporting youth and sports movements.

The government will work on

encouraging the spread of Islamic culture and will adopt the Islamic Sharia law and rules as the main source of legislation. The government will also support the role of mosques through providing the preaching and guidance system with efficient qualified imams, upgrading levels of tuition and sermons, intensifying religious lessons to steer citizens to the meaning of good, virtue and tolerance. The government will also activate the role of Islamic culture and the Holy Koran's homes, and attach maximum attention to religious tuition through improving the performance of community colleges, institutions and religious schools.

The government will go forward in executing the royal wish to renovate the tomb of the companions of Prophet Mohammad as it did in continuing to support the committee of renovating Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock, to maintain and reconstruct Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem and the restoration of Al Aqsa pulpit to be a replica of Saladin's pulpit.

The government will make sure to support the tasks of the Islamic waqf, develop its resources and invest its properties, along it to perform its duties towards society, contributing to achieving development and fighting poverty, and utilising the zakat (alms to the poor) fund to reach this end.

The government will continue performing its duties towards pilgrims and provide them with the best of services.

In the field of administrative reform and development, the government is determined to utilise the human resources, upgrade its efficiency, develop its positive attitudes towards civil service, encourage qualification and vocational training of all service citizens to deal with the civil service system and develop legislations governing civil service in a manner resulting in additional concentration on the supremacy of the law and observation of the integrity and objectivity in the appointment and promotion procedures. The government will attach special attention to support national industries, enhance domestic production in quantity and quality through applying the international specification standards in terms of quality in a way that meets the local market needs and requirements, and bolster the ability to compete in foreign markets.

The government has already devised the appropriate mechanism to apply the rules of law which was approved by your honourable House and came into effect as of 16 Jan. 1985.

The government will attempt to motivate individual initiatives and encourage the private sector to play its effective national role in the economic development process thus enhancing the complementary relationship between the private and public sectors and to increase the private sector's contribution in economic development.

The government will apply the privatisation policy gradually giving priority to private sector-oriented investment in the fields of tourism, transport, communication and other service industries while the government would keep its investment in strategic industries. The government will continue converting some of its corporations to fully state-owned companies in preparation for privatisation.

The government will support the Audit Bureau and the Bureau of Administration Monitoring and Inspection enabling them to perform their tasks of safeguarding public funds, and ensuring administrative performance to its best.

In order to provide an easy access for the citizen to achieve social and administrative services, my government will work on fixing the national number and making it obligatory. The numbers of almost 90 per cent of the citizens have already been registered at the Civil Status Department.

With regard to the economic field, the government's efforts will concentrate on improving the process of comprehensive development through achieving sustainable economic growth and reviving the economic sectors which suffered lately from some slowdowns. The government will also give maximum attention to create the appropriate investment environment to attract local and foreign investment since investment is the corner stone for the attainment of healthy and sustainable growth.

Necessary measures will be taken to stimulate national savings, broaden the productivity base, increase competitive capacity of local exports, maintain ideal utilisation of the available resources, activate the private sector's role in pushing forward the national economy movement and distribute the proceeds of development in a way that ensures the desired social justice in various parts of the Kingdom.

Therefore, the government is determined to adopt a convenient economic framework which guarantees the establishment of sound economic bases resulting in achieving continued growth, maintaining monetary and financial

stability and surmounting discrepancies and deformities. In conclusion, it is imperative to go forward in implementing the national economic restructuring programme with full strength and determination as it represents the appropriate pillar for growth, continuity, preservation of the stability of the Jordanian dinar exchange rate, augmenting the Kingdom's foreign currency reserves and achieving relative stability in the general level of prices.

The government will work on developing economic legislation, foremost of which are the laws of encouraging investment, companies, free zone corporations, Amman Financial Market, customs brokers and middlemen with a view to enhance investment incentives clarify legal texts, facilitate procedures, remove all investment barriers, ease burdens laid on investors, facilitate their work and familiarise them with the available investment opportunities as well as to encourage foreign investment within the framework of national priorities that best achieve the public interest. The government will continue to improve the national economy infrastructure and provide the basic services supportive to the investment sectors especially those related to water, electricity, telecommunications and roads.

The government will work on enacting a new draft law for income tax whose articles would cope with modern developments and take into consideration the achievement of further taxation justice, the encouragement of investment and the maintaining of tax revenues as well as realising clarity of the articles and rules to reduce interpretations as much as possible when applying them. The government would like to encourage the private sector not impose new taxes on capital profits including profits resulting from real estates and financial market dealings nor will it distinguish between various activities regardless of who is conducting them.

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debts of creditors fully for partially or transforming parts of the debts into grants used to finance investment ventures in Jordan.

The government will also seek to reschedule debts on easy terms in the context of executive agreements of the Paris Club minutes.

The government will be committed to laws related to public debts and not to expand local borrowing, in order to enable the private sector to acquire necessary credits from the banking system to finance its investment ventures.

The government will accelerate capital expenditure especially in labour intensive projects that can be constructed quickly such as rural and agricultural roads, schools, and government premises, medical centres, hospitals, dams and irrigation, with the aim of reviving economic activities and providing employment opportunities funds allocated for these projects in the budget (reaching 125 per cent of the government will also seek to secure needed financing with soft terms to carry out projects of the JD390 million second chapter of the general budget from brotherly and friendly countries and international foundations.

The government will attach major attention to the tourism sector springing from the fact that our country has a distinguished national fortune of antiquities and unique cultural tourism and religious attractions which the government is keen to safeguard from any misuse and maintain as a witness to our heritage and history, and as part of our national and pan-Arab identity.

The government will work on making tourism a major part of our national economy. It will enhance the role of the higher council of tourism, encourage investment in tourism, and will provide opportunities and incentives for its initiatives enabling it to compete in regional and international tourism markets.

The government will carry out the infrastructural projects required for the establishment of investment ventures in various tourist locations especially in the areas of Petra, the Dead Sea and the southern shore of Agaba, thus making these areas suitable for private sector investment. In addition, the Wadi Rum area will receive special attention and efforts will be made to develop it as a potential tourist location. The government will also form the Petra region council to secure and supervise the services in the area in a comprehensive manner.

The government will also develop the public antiquities law and activate the Antiquities Department to deal with the phenomenon of violating historical sites. It will also develop a data documentation system related to heritage and historical sites, and continue cooperation with local and international academic institutions and centres to conduct excavations, works, maintenance programmes, and renovation to safeguard these historical sites for future generations. All needed will be attached to the work of the Jordanian tourism authority in order to fulfil its tasks and will encourage Arab and domestic tourism because of its national and economic advantages.

In the field of energy and mineral resources, the government will continue its efforts in the exploration of oil and other raw materials, in addition to pursuing efforts in exploitation of alternative energy resources, such as oil shale. The government will continue implementing the "rural life" plan aiming at providing electricity to the remaining one per cent of the population. Jordan that so far do not enjoy these services, and will construct the power stations needed to cope with growing demand on electricity and modernise power supply grid. The government will also continue supplying crude oil and its by-products to meet the people's demand.

Due to the government's realisation of the importance of Arab economic integration, it will seek the creation of a better climate in order to restore inter-Arab relations to their previous levels and to reach a greater degree of economic integration. Arising from the distinguished relations between the brotherly Jordanian and Palestinian peoples, the government will attach special attention to the importance of building a common economic future which requires additional economic and social cooperation in a manner that brings about greater benefit to the two peoples.

The government is seeking to cope with regional and international changes and developments in an attempt to contain their impact and adjust to them and to enhance partnership relations with international economic blocs such as the European Union in order to reap the positive benefits of projects financing, and to make use of the international economic openness.

In the field of social security,

the government will work on developing the social security umbrella to provide basic needs and services to citizens through the expansion of health and educational services, the improvement of annual salary raises for civil servants, the adoption of a national housing programme for civil servants and those with low incomes and the support of the civil and military consumer corporations through increasing customs duty exemption granted to them.

The government believes in the just issue of the civic and military pensioners in accordance with His Majesty King Hussein's directives. Therefore, it is currently studying various alternatives with the objective of improving their pensions. A suitable decision will be taken soon, regarding this issue in accordance with what the government pledged before your honourable House.

The government will continue providing essential food items for citizens such as bread, rice, sugar and powdered milk in quantities that meet demand, with subsidised prices provided to those deserving support, in addition to securing the strategic reserve of basic food commodities through increasing storage capacities, expansion in building supply complexes including increasing the number of ordinary and refrigerated warehouses, and the enlargement of grain silos in order to meet growing consumption demand. The government will establish these ventures in all of the Kingdom's governorates.

My government attach maximum priority to the problems of poverty and unemployment. It will work hard to reduce their negative impact since the solution needs comprehensive efforts from a long-term perspective. The national necessity makes it imperative to adopt quick measures to face these challenges. This will be done through supporting small scale productive income generating projects, and encouraging investments. In addition, the necessity of activating the role of the private sector in the process of comprehensive development, and in carrying out labour intensive capital ventures. It will also have various expanded vocational and rehabilitation programmes, and the increase in the number of those benefiting from the programmes during 1995 to exceed 25,000 trainees.

The government will also encourage private participation and activate social aid institutions such as Al Zaka (alms for the poor) Fund, charitable societies and the National Aid Fund whose allocations were raised by 14 per cent this year in order to expand the umbrella of the recipients of its services. In addition, fiscal aid to families ranged from JD 50 to 60 per month. The government will activate the Development and Employment Fund and spread its services in all areas of the Kingdom. It will cooperate with the Agriculture Credit Corporation, Queen Alia Fund and voluntary work institutions.

The government will form a higher council for the social security and aid network including groups which are relevant to the field in order to draw up a coordinated, comprehensive and clear cut plan with the aim of providing aid to those deserving it and contributing to the elimination of poverty and cutting down unemployment rates.

The government will seek to realise a qualitative leap in the field of social legislation to guarantee the continuation of activating the role of women in the process of comprehensive development and their role in family life. The government will attach special attention to the handicapped improving their income levels to enable them to live in dignity.

In the field of labour the government will organise their labour market providing employment opportunities for Jordanians seeking jobs and steering local labour into benefiting from vocational training programmes and professional rehabilitation to seize available employment opportunities in addition to serious efforts in opening more employment opportunities abroad especially for trained cadres. The government will work on organising all that is related to foreign labour correcting the status of those currently employed in cooperation with labour unions employers and parties concerned with relevant specialities and activating the residence law in that regard.

The Social Security Corporation will develop its investment policy as a savings corporation through partnerships with the private sector establishing companies and ventures through investment in various fiscal tools such as loan guarantees bonds and real estates and through saving certain percentage of its surpluses in the form of saving deposits ready to meet cash liquidity needs.

The corporation is currently studying modifying the rules of

social security law in the light of economic and social changes. The corporation will reconsider through this study the current insurance formula including raising the minimum level of pension and disability salaries taking into consideration maintaining a balance between the corporation's revenues and expenditures.

The corporation is also studying the potential of providing health insurance for pensioners who do not benefit from civil military or private health insurance schemes, a step towards protecting those who do not have health insurance in the light of the study which was conducted for implementing the health insurance project in cooperation with the centre for technical consultations and studies at the University of Jordan.

My government is concerned with developing the agricultural sector leading to a greater contribution to gross domestic production and improving income for workers in the sector. In order to achieve this, the government will adopt certain measures to improve agricultural production in relation to water and land without harming the environment.

The government will also intensify agricultural research and work on moving its programmes from experimental stations to the fields in an effort to lead these researchers to meet the requirements of farmers.

The government will improve the services of agriculture guidance and protection. It will also improve services in the veterinary field through public clinics and the establishment of quality laboratory and medical vet monitoring.

For the purpose of developing agricultural production and land reclamation, the government will produce seven million forestry plants distributed freely to people, in addition to 1.5 million olive plants distributed for farmers at low prices. The government will help in recultivating 125,000 dunums of arable lands planting them with fruit trees, and 60,000 dunums with pine trees.

In an effort to solve the negative impact of the problem of small agricultural property and the fact that it is being reduced, fragmented and scattered, the government will draft a programme of allocating agricultural slots as soon as the division of fixed assets, currently before your honourable House. Soft loans will also be available to continue grouping properties through financing buyouts of other shares.

In the field of financing, measures will be taken to incorporate the sources of government agricultural lending into the Agricultural Credit Corporation. In order to enable it to cover the activities of the cooperative societies and the farmers union enabling them to secure the requirements of production at reasonable prices, and establishing agricultural industries, in addition to supporting agricultural marketing activities.

To carry out these measures efficiently, the government will attach special attention to the importance of institutional development process, enhancing popular participation in formulating agricultural decisions. The government will attach special attention to the importance of institutional development process, enhancing popular participation in formulating agricultural decisions. The government will attach special attention to the importance of institutional development process, enhancing popular participation in formulating agricultural decisions.

The government will continue developing the Wadi Araba area with the aim of making it a population attraction centre, in addition to completing studies to develop the Dead Sea shore providing it with the needed infrastructure suitable for tourism investment.

The government will take steps to guarantee the expansion of the health insurance umbrella, as well as expansion in providing medical services through the opening and operating of new hospitals in Karak, Der Abi Saad, Yajoz, Irbid, Ma'an, and

Sahab, and the construction of hospitals in the central Jordanian Valley area, Bani Kenanah district, and Wadi Musa. The government will also build emergency centres in Ma'an, Irbid, and Salt, in addition to establishing medical equipments maintenance centres, improving primary medical care services through having more health centres and providing the hospitals of the Ministry of Health with full boarding services.

The government will attach more attention to the issue of food control. In order to realise this, the government is determined to draft a law to establish an independent institution to take under its responsibility all issues related to food monitoring in an effort to safeguard the citizens' health.

The government will also work on developing and modernising the laboratories services especially in the fields of food, medicine and environment.

A nursing faculty will be established in the governorate of Karak to fulfil needs of nursing cadres.

In the field of municipal and rural affairs and the environment, my government will hold municipal elections for all municipalities on a certain July day this year in accordance with the law. The government will guarantee the elections to take place in an honest and democratic atmosphere.

The government will pursue efforts to draft an environment bill meeting major objectives of the national strategies of the protection of environment.

The Bank of Urban and Rural Development is currently studying the possibilities of exempting local councils from paying interests on 1995 loans, in addition to the possibility of allocating part of its profits to support local councils suffering from difficult financial conditions provided that these councils draw up plans to improve these conditions under the supervision of the bank, and linking this allocation with progress achieved in the implementation of the programme.

The government will tend to reform the transportation policies, develop legislations, restructure some public institutions, encourage investment and improve services, establishing management data systems, and the development of security and safety factors. All this can be achieved through reorganising the transportation of passengers and goods, determining the Kingdom's needs of commuting vehicles, stimulating investment to provide them, establishing service installations in the form of stations and resthouses, and the modernisation of the road infrastructure.

The government will attach maximum importance to the sea port of Agaba to activate its role and upgrade it and utilise its potential to meet anticipated increase in the volume of goods and the number of travellers and to ensure the achievement of maritime transportation companies and opening room for the private sector to invest in this area.

In the area of air transport, the government will draw a comprehensive plan to modernise and upgrade Jordanian airports. The Royal Jordanian Air will attach required attention aimed at increasing its capabilities, upgrading its performance and modernising its fleet to always be the bridge connecting Jordan with the rest of the world aiming at performing its national role through reflecting the image of our accomplishments to other countries.

The government will work on putting a complete perspective to the state of economic activities, urban regions and neighbouring countries with a network of rail-roads, and continue to force bilateral agreements in land, sea and air transport in a way of achieving the best interest to the country and citizens and secure markets for Jordanian products.

My government will continue to implement major and minor rural and agricultural road projects and secure the necessary maintenance for them to preserve this national wealth. During this year some major roads will be completed most important of which is Azzarah-Ghor Hadithah road. There will be emphasis on agricultural roads to facilitate access of farmers to their lands and their utilisation of them. The government will focus on housing activities and spread relevant projects all over the country and restructure the housing sector in order to activate the role of the private sector to serve low-income group.

The government will also work on repairing the Agaba ring road to make commuting safer and easier.

The government will seek to broaden and modernise mail services especially in the field of electronic express mail, establish new post offices, upgrade the existing ones and accelerate and broaden mail services. The government will also work on

broadening telephone services through the focus on the implementation of the national communications programme, increasing telephone services availability from a now seven per cent to 11 per cent in 1998 by adding 250,000 new telephone lines, providing telephone services in 553 locations distributed in all governorates and activating the role of the private sector in this field to develop and broaden the telephone service provided that supervision and monitoring remain in government hand.

While my government is presenting your honourable House with this statement, it realises that this new stage of the nation's life, plans and aspirations cannot be isolated from its Arab and Islamic environment, the region's environment and developments and changes the world is witnessing.

Springing from this fact, my government affirms its full keenness on achieving Arab solidarity, seeking to build strong relations with all Arab countries based on mutual trust and respect, aiming to achieve the highest level of coordination and integration in various political, economic, social and cultural fields and to activating the establishment of common Arab action with the Arab League as its top priority.

The government will also continue efforts it started to clear Arab atmosphere to reach a unified Arab stand, refocusing on building an Arab order that responds to the stage's requirements and guarantees Arab national security so that the Ummah can take its place in the world which is forming around it and changing in a way that urges it to defend its interests and achieve its international and human presence in the best way.

In this context, the government affirms the depth of relations between the two brotherly Jordanian and Palestinian peoples and Jordan's continuous support to the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, their sole legitimate representative and the Palestinian people's right of self-determination and establishing their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. It will continue to enhance this relation and support the steadfastness of the Arab Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The government is keen to establish close and comprehensive ties with the Palestine National Authority according to a clear vision that ensures the national interest of both brotherly peoples.

My government views the peace treaty with Israel as an episode in achieving the peace through which we regain our sovereignty on our occupied land and waters. Springing from its commitment to the historical Arab rights and international conventions and agreements, it affirms that it will continue to seek the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on restoring all Arab rights, liberating the whole occupied Arab lands in implementation of international resolutions 242, 338 and 425 and the government will continue bilateral and multilateral negotiations to reach agreements that ensure the achievement of our full national and pan-national goals and interests.

My government will continue efforts to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people and end the embargo imposed on them in cooperation with brotherly and friendly countries.

Regarding Jordan's relations with the brethren in Islamic countries, it will continue, stemming out of the keenness to strengthen brotherly ties and mutual respect, to bolster bilateral relations in fields of common action, support its foundations in the best interest of pur Islamic Ummah and reflect the image of tolerance of Islam. The government will remain keen to stand by the Muslim brethren who are facing oppression and aggression in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The government also affirms its keenness to ease the suffering of the brotherly Chechen people. On the international level, my government is keen to abide by the U.N. charter, respect international legitimacy, defend human rights and the right of every nation to self-determination in a world governed by security and peace and totally free from mass destruction weapons.

Jordan's will improve relations with international economic and political blocs and develop bilateral relations with friendly countries in a way that insures Jordan's interest and enhances its distinguished international status.

In conclusion, while my government is introducing its programme to your honourable House, I let all put their trust on Him.

May peace be upon you. His blessing and mercy.

Business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Expatriates' remittances climb to JD 850 m

Jordanian expatriates sent home a total of \$1.3 billion (JD 850 million) in 1994, compared to \$1 billion (JD 666 million) in 1993, Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi told a group of journalists. He added that Jordanian exports last year went up from JD 691 million in 1993 to approximately JD 950 million in 1994. The governor noted that Jordan last year had the highest volume of exports per capita among all Arab states, except for the oil-producing ones. According to Dr. Nabulsi, Jordan's imports in 1994 totalled \$3.2 billion, or about JD 2 billion, which means there was a \$1.8 billion (JD 1.2 billion) trade deficit (Al Dustour).

Tabineh, or sesame paste, which does not have a government-fixed price is now selling for JD 1.350 a kilogramme instead of one dinar a few days ago. The price of sesame has internationally increased from JD 350 a tonne in late 1994 to JD 700 a tonne last week. With so high a price for sesame, producers of balah are demanding that the price fixed for their output by the Ministry of Supply be raised. Citing losses from selling at 900 fils a kilogramme, balah producers say the production cost reaches JD 1.100 a kilogramme. The ministry is reportedly considering floating the price of balah (Al Dustour).

The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) is restructuring the organisational chart of its personnel to reflect the actual need for staff that would match the volume of work. According to the IDB chief, the number of employees increased from 113 to 163 over the past five years without any actual rise in the volume of work. Noting that salaries went up by 67 per cent over the period, he explained that the administrative and general expenses have climbed to JD 1,824,760. Four employees were terminated at the beginning of the year and another two have resigned (Al Ra'i).

The government cancelled an order to buy 50,000 tonnes of barley after its offer to pay \$121 per tonne was rejected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Al Ra'i).

According to a decision by the Ministry of Supply, the price of an Extra Brazilian canned meat is JD 1.135 and the price of a two-kilogramme bloc of Essen cheese is JD 4.225 (Al Ra'i).

The Cities and Villages Development Bank made a JD3 million profit last year. In 1994, the bank extended JD7.6 million in loans to 80 municipal councils and 36 village councils; 47 per cent of the loans were to open and asphalt roads, 10 per cent for productive projects and 24 per cent for rescheduling instalments and interests that were due. The rest of the loans were spent on buying equipment, constructing public buildings and compensating people for appropriations of their land (Al Ra'i).

Construction has started for the National Company for the Aluminium Industries plant at a cost of JD850,000. The area of the plant will be about 12,000 square metres while the total area of the project is 130,000 square metres. Construction is expected to be finished by July and trial production is expected to begin by September. The company's authorised capital is JD12 million, but the paid-up capital is only JD6 million. There are about 3,500 shareholders in the company (Al Ra'i).

Egyptian state holding company to issue bonds worth \$320 million

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian state's Holding Company for Construction will offer the public tax-exempt bonds worth up to 1.1 billion pounds (\$320 million) between now and June, Public Sector Minister Atef Obeid said. Mr. Obeid, quoted by the government newspaper Al Ahram, said the interest rate on the bonds would be about 1.5 percentage points above deposit rates offered by banks and lower than the rates construction companies pay for bank loans. The public-sector companies owned by the holding company would use the money raised to finance new projects, he added. Al Ahram quoted Mr. Obeid as saying public-sector construction companies and contractors owed banks exactly the same amount, 1.1 billion pounds, at the end of the 1993/4 financial year last June but it did not link the debt with the bonds. It was not immediately clear if foreign entities would be able to buy the bonds but as the Egyptian government continues to reform the economy it is making less distinction between Egyptians and foreigners. The upper house of the Egyptian parliament Thursday approved a law enabling the finance ministry to issue separate long-term bonds worth up to 15 billion pounds (\$4.4 billion). The bonds, designed to replace some of the short-term treasury bills issued through the central bank, would have maturities of between five and 15 years, Al Ahram said. The Egyptian Stock Exchange would run a secondary market.

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

| Currency | New York Close Jan 25, 1995 | Tel Aviv Close Jan 25, 1995 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Sterling Pound | 1.5470 | 1.535*** |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.5125 | 1.5121 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.2713 | 1.2700*** |
| French Franc | 5.2340 | 5.2335*** |
| Japanese Yen | 99.78 | 99.55 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.2505 | 1.2511*** |

USD Per JLD

European Opening at 8:00 AM GMT

European Closing at 4:00 PM GMT

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Tourism industry forecast to double by 2005

MADRID (R) — The worldwide tourism industry should double in size in dollar terms over the next 10 years and by 2010 nearly a billion people a year will be making international trips, tourism officials said Tuesday. This will bring wealth and jobs, but will pose a potential danger to the environment and to local cultures in prime holiday destinations. Tourism should generate \$7.2 trillion by 2005 compared with \$3.4 trillion this year, said Geoffrey Lipman, president of the World Travel and Tourism Council. In real terms this would be a 55 per cent rise. Some 212 million jobs worldwide depend directly and indirectly on tourism and this should rise to 338 million in 10 years time. "Travel and tourism creates a new job every 2.5 seconds and generates investment of \$3.3 billion a day," he told a seminar hosted by the Madrid-based World Tourism Organisation (WTO). Government officials' eyes tend to glaze over when they

talk of tourism, Mr. Lipman added, but they should recognise its value as a job creator. The industry will account for 10.9 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995, he said. In Spain it will earn 18.9 per cent of GDP, second only to the Caribbean where it brings in 31.5 per cent. By 2010 the WTO estimates there will be 937 million tourists travelling the world compared with 528 million last year. Business travellers and holidaymakers are becoming

increasingly demanding about the quality of travel and hotel services and governments need to invest in road and airport infrastructure to keep up with growth, tourism officials said. International travellers last year went increasingly to Oceania, South America and South Africa while numbers fell in places like Turkey, North Africa and France, the organisation's head of statistics Enzo Paci said. Opinion polls show tourists are becoming more and more concerned about their safety, said Martin Brackenbury of the International Federation of Tour Operators. In a recent survey by the Mori Polling Company 43 per

cent said they had reservations about New York, 33 per cent about Florida, 30 per cent about Gambia and 29 per cent about Israel. Australia came near the bottom of the table with only two per cent of those polled saying they were worried about safety. "The choice of destination will be made increasingly with the accent on safety," Mr. Brackenbury said. This means growing numbers of visitors will be concentrated in certain areas and these will have to juggle expansion with preserving the local culture and environment. "Tourism cannot destroy the environment without destroying itself," he said.

Coffee prices brought down in Jordan's retail market

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Supply and coffee traders have worked out a compromise price for coffee after several weeks of see-sawing prices.

Under the compromise, a kilogramme of ground Turkish coffee will be sold at JD 4.4, down around 500 fils from the market prices that prevailed before the deal was struck following a study by the authorities.

Coffee prices went up dramatically in 1994 following reports of crop damages in Brazil, the world's leading producer of coffee beans. In the London market, a tonne of coffee reached \$7,000, up from around \$2,500 in the beginning of the year and \$1,800 in mid-1993. Prices fell this week to around \$4,000 per tonne.

But retail prices in Jordan went up even before any compromise was reached at the high prices reached the shores of the Kingdom in what officials and industry sources described as the overenthusiasm of local traders to take advantage of the rise in international prices.

It is estimated Jordan imports coffee worth about JD 10 million every year. The final figures for coffee imports for 1994 are not yet available, but it is expected to have risen slightly as a result of the hike in international prices, but nowhere near the level that would have war-

anted the dramatic boost in the local retail prices, market experts say.

At the height of the frenzy, prices hit as much as JD 7 per kilogramme of ground Turkish coffee, a highly popular consumable in the Kingdom.

Coffee prices were strictly controlled by the Ministry of Supply until the late 80s when the government, in a line with the gradual shift towards a free market, slightly relaxed the controls but still retained the authority to set the market prices.

"We can understand when the local traders increase their prices when the international prices also go up," said an official. "But there is no logic or explanation when local prices are raised in less than 48 hours after market prices in London go up."

Another complaint raised by consumers as well as traders is the rising price of cardamom, a key ingredient that produces aromatic coffee.

"Prices are going up in Latin America, mainly Guatemala, which offers some of the cheap varieties of cardamom," said an importer. "But we find it difficult to reflect the increase in our retail prices, particularly that people are already complaining about the rise in coffee prices."

But, said the trader, a kilogramme of ground Turkish coffee, "with an acceptable content of cardamom," is not going to cost less than between JD 5.75 to 6.25 quite soon.

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|--|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
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| ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 25/01/1995 | | | |
| COMPANY'S NAME | NO. OF SHARES TRADED | VALUE TRADED | PREV. CLOSING PRICE |
| ARAB BANK | 240 | 44365 | 185.000 |
| JORDAN NATIONAL BANK | 9650 | 42954 | 3.500 |
| JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW | 11358 | 42952 | 4.260 |
| BANK OF JORDAN | 9057 | 23057 | 3.650 |
| INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK | 225 | 285 | 2.850 |
| THE HOUSING BANK | 10600 | 6868 | 6.500 |
| JORDAN KUNAAT BANK | 12135 | 16995 | 3.050 |
| JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK | 33664 | 130222 | 3.870 |
| UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT | 275 | 128 | 5.100 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 80 | 25 | 4.290 |
| BEIT JALAL SAVING & INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING | 2150 | 10218 | 3.260 |
| ASBANK BANK FOR INVESTMENT | 86180 | 227466 | 1.440 |
| ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN | 550 | 2110 | 4.150 |
| PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK | 4600 | 7360 | 1.600 |
| BANKS SECTOR | 183626 | 551272 | INDEX NUMBER: 160.00 |
| INSURANCE SECTOR | 54 | 294 | INDEX NUMBER: 136.68 |
| CHARGE | | | 1.000% |
| INDUSTRIAL SECTOR | 75417 | 214117 | INDEX NUMBER: 133.61 |
| CHARGE | | | 1.125% |
| AGRICULTURE SECTOR | 75 | 101 | INDEX NUMBER: 1.350 |
| CHARGE | | | 1.250% |
| ATTAKEEP CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING | 75 | 24524 | 2.950 |
| THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES | 8320 | 24524 | 2.950 |
| JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES | 757 | 2157 | 2.850 |
| THE ARAB POTASH/NEW | 200 | 1035 | 5.250 |
| JORDAN PETROLEUM COMPANY | 410 | 2937 | 9.610 |
| THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL | 507 | 2139 | 4.260 |
| THE JORDAN HORSTED MILLS | 266 | 2100 | 7.900 |
| ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING | 10418 | 55888 | 5.250 |
| THE JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING | 1052 | 2641 | 2.700 |
| SPINNING & WEAVING | 1250 | 3260 | 2.650 |
| RAPIA INDUSTRIES | 2200 | 6120 | 2.800 |
| ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE | 8500 | 8663 | 1.030 |
| ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY | 4100 | 29120 | 7.130 |
| LYSSECO & POLYESTER | 300 | 930 | 3.250 |
| GENERAL INVESTMENT | 2050 | 2932 | 1.430 |
| JORDAN PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING | 1000 | 4350 | 4.350 |
| REGIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY | 1400 | 3665 | 2.700 |
| INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES | 6950 | 10421 | 1.630 |
| JORDAN ROCKWELL INDUSTRIES | 1150 | 4733 | 4.000 |
| ALADITH INDUSTRIES | 650 | 2908 | 4.400 |
| JORDAN INDUSTRIES & HATCHES/STCO | 1750 | 1213 | 810 |
| ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS | 550 | 1454 | 2.700 |
| KAMATEH INVESTMENT | 500 | 880 | 1.750 |
| UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES | 250 | 1213 | 4.270 |
| JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO. | 12980 | 28997 | 2.250 |
| INDUSTRIAL SECTOR | 124468 | 252416 | INDEX NUMBER: 127.14 |
| CHARGE | | | -0.43% |
| GRAND TOTAL | 303565 | 1017897 | INDEX NUMBER: 144.47 |
| CHARGE | | | -0.41% |
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Australian Open

Agassi, Sanchez Vicario advance to semifinals

MELBOURNE (AP) — Andre Agassi continued his relentless march through the Australian Open tennis championships, defeating Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov in straight sets Wednesday to advance to the semifinals.

Agassi, the flamboyant No. 2 seed making his debut in the tournament, downed 10th-seeded Kafelnikov 6-2, 7-5, 6-0 in just 83 minutes.

"In hit the ball well, executed well," Agassi said. "It was a good day at the office."

It was Agassi's fifth successive victory without dropping a set and gave the United States three men's semifinalists.

Defending champion Pete Sampras will face No. 5 seed Michael Chang in one semi, while Agassi will face Aaron Krickstein of the United States who beat Dutchman Jacco Eltingh 7-6 (7-3), 6-4, 5-7, 6-4.

Agassi, the U.S. Open champion, said he was delighted with his form. "I think quite honestly this has been incredible practice for me, more than anything," Agassi said. "To play three sets every other day is not taking a whole lot out of me."

"I feel like it's all gone well for me."

Agassi had requested a daytime match to prepare him for the final two rounds.

"I felt good to be out there in the sun and get a little bit of a tan," he said. "I feel quite comfortable on all my shots right now," he said. "I feel like I'm serving exceptionally well and utilizing it."

Agassi had time to feel sorry for Sampras, who was in tears during his dramatic five-set quarterfinal victory over Jim Courier on Tuesday night and is distressed by the illness of his coach Tim Gulikson.

"It's an extraordinary thing to see what Pete's managed to do," he said. "He's an incredibly gifted person. He's a deep person as well, who is obviously feeling a lot of things and is going through a lot of things at the moment with Tim. I can certainly identify with that. Just to have him still in the tournament is an asset. It's inspiring, you know."

Gulikson suffered strokes twice last year and had to return home from the Australian Open after feeling unwell and being hospitalized for tests.

Aranza Sanchez Vicario earlier ended the inspired run of Naoko Sawamatsu and moved to within two victories of her first Australian Open women's singles title and the No. 1 ranking.



Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov reacts during his quarterfinal match at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

The top-seed from Spain defeated unseeded Sawamatsu 6-1, 6-3, to advance to a semifinal meeting with another unseeded player — American Marianne Werdel Witmeyer.

The 27-year-old Californian, who had not made it past the third round in 29 previous grand slam tournaments, downed her former hitting partner Angelica Gavaldon 6-1, 6-2 in just 56 minutes in an earlier quarterfinal.

The other women's semifinal will be between No. 2 seed Conchita Martinez of Spain and No. 4 seed Mary Pierce of France, both of whom won their quarterfinals on Tuesday.

Sawamatsu, who is ranked 26th in the world, made the last eight despite the trauma of her family home being destroyed in last week's Kobe earthquake. She had dedicated her victories to victims of the quake and has vowed to donate a percentage of her earnings to them.

"I'm very satisfied with my results," she said. "It was quite hard to concentrate due to the circumstances back home."

The 21-year-old university student was simply overpowered by the stocky Sanchez Vicario in 65 minutes.

The Spaniard won the point 11 of the 15 times she approached the net and hit 22

winner to 10 for Sawamatsu.

Sanchez Vicario, the French and U.S. Open champion, qualified for her 14th Grand Slam semifinal — at the age of just 23. She will take over the No. 1 ranking from the injured Steffi Graf if she wins the tournament.

"I think I played really well when I needed to play well," Sanchez Vicario said. "I concentrated and started playing longer and moving her really well and then finished the points."

Werdel Witmeyer used her power from the back of the court to good effect against Gavaldon, going for broke repeatedly sending the ball whistling past her Mexican opponent.

Werdel Witmeyer hit 26 winners to just one by her more conservative rival, who rarely ventured from the baseline. Gavaldon, a 21-year-old ranked 96 in the world, made the quarters of the Australian Open five years ago, but seemed overawed by the occasion.

"I wanted to be the one who was being aggressive," Werdel Witmeyer said. "I wanted to get her on the run before she got me on the run."

Werdel Witmeyer is guaranteed at least U.S. \$90,000 for making the semis — more than half her total earnings in 1994.

"I haven't been thinking about the money," she said. "I just treated today like any other match."

Gavaldon, who beat No. 3 Jana Novotna and No. 15 Lori McNeil on her way to the last eight, said she had not been hampered by a head cold that has afflicted her over the past week.

"She played well and I didn't play my best tennis, I can't use the cold as an excuse," she said. "She didn't really give me a chance to play well."

Gavaldon, whose appearance in the quarterfinals caused great excitement in Mexico, said she had paid the penalty for not hitting the ball deep enough.

"She's been zoning all tournament and I hit the ball too short," she said. "Maybe I could have been a little more aggressive — but it was hard."

The tournament, sponsored by Ford, offers prize money of U.S. \$6.2 million and continues through Sunday.

Australian Open notebook

★ French tennis player Mary Pierce has a big fan in American coaching guru Nick Bollettieri — but he says she still has things to prove.

Bollettieri has been in Melbourne watching Pierce's progress into the semifinals of the Australian Open.

"Whoever plays Sanchez Vicario (in the final) will have to hit more balls than ever before in her life — and you can get frustrated. Whether Mary is or not ready for that I don't know."

Bollettieri said last year's French Open final, in which Pierce was beaten by Sanchez Vicario, was an important learning experience, "but that's past tense."

"You can't live on that," said Bollettieri, who is part of Pierce's support group. "I think Mary has a lot of charisma, she's a beautiful girl, she certainly hits the ball like most men. The question still remains: Is she ready at the age of 20 to take over and win a Grand Slam?"

★ Realistic attitude: Marianne Werdel Witmeyer, a surprise semifinalist at the Australian Open, is a tennis realist.

"In the last couple of years I've gotten a lot better about staying positive and realizing that if you're not top 10, that doesn't mean you're a failure," said 47th-ranked Werdel Witmeyer after her 6-1, 6-2, quarterfinal victory over Mexican Angelica Gavaldon.

Five years ago, she considered quitting tennis, but was

talked out of it by her future husband, former Oakland athletics first baseman Ron Witmeyer.

"He definitely thought that it would be better to stop on a good note, stop when you want to stop, not because you're not doing as well as you think," she said. "Ten years down the road you end up regretting that you quit before you really felt like you did everything you could do."

She and her husband had similar talks about his career. He quit after spending most of his time in the Minors, but was recently asked to go to spring training as a replacement player.

"We've gone through a lot of ups and downs together," she said. "When he was with Oakland and was called up to the Major Leagues, it was the same year my ranking had gone into the 20s. Then the next year, we both kind of struggled. It helps that you both go through things and can help each other out."

★ Caps for success: One of the big corporate successes at the Australian Open has been Global Caps, a company owned by American Peter Bower and two tennis players who came up with the idea of putting national flags on caps and selling them at sporting events around the world.

Bower mentioned the idea of golfing partner and former Swedish tennis player Mikael Pernfors, who bought into the company along with former Australian Open champion Mats Wilander.

In their first year at Flinders Park, site of the Australian Open, Global Caps have sold 4,500 of the baseball-type caps at U.S. \$18 each.

The Australian design is the most popular, but hot on its heels are the Swedish, American and German caps. Bower has 25 flags on caps and is pumping out new countries at the rate of one a week.

He is producing thousands to sell at next year's Atlanta Olympics and while in Australia has approached the Sydney 2000 Olympic Committee for a similar arrangement.

★ All in a name: Australia's multicultural population is very evident in the draw for the junior boys and girls at the Australian Open.

Aarhi Venkatesan, Sayed-Akram Zaman, Jan-Ralf Brandt, Lana Scardigno, Wojtek Stasiak and Jong-Min Lee were among the Australians competitors in action Wednesday. One in three Australian was born overseas or has parents that were.



Indiana Pacer Dale Davis #32 shoots between David Robinson as Pacer Mark Jackson San Antonio Spurs' Sean Elliott (left) and watches (AFP photo)

NBA ROUNDUP

Robinson helps propel Spurs past Bulls in overtime

CHICAGO (AP) — Scottie Pippen threw a chair across the United Center court after getting ejected in the first half Tuesday night, and David Robinson and the San Antonio Spurs took advantage of his absence to beat the Chicago Bulls 104-102 in overtime.

Robinson made two free throws with six-tenths of a second left in regulation to send the game into the overtime at 93-93. He scored 9 of the Spurs' 11 points in the extra period, capped by his layup with 1.7 seconds to go.

Toni Kukoc scored 28 points, but Chicago's most impressive athletic feat was Pippen's two-handed, overhead, cross-court toss of a chair after referee Joe Crawford ejected him with 2:56 left in the first half. Crawford said Pippen tried on consecutive San Antonio possessions to get a 3-second violation called against the spurs.

Magic 110, Celtics 97: In Orlando, Florida, Shaquille O'Neal took advantage of Boston's foul-plagued big men to score 31 points as the magic improved to 19-0 at home.

Donald Royal added 19 points for the Magic, who lead the NBA with a 33-8 record. The Celtics lost their fifth straight game.

Suns 100, Timberwolves 85: In Minneapolis, Dan Ma-

jerle and A.C. Green made 3-point shots during a 12-0 run in the fourth quarter as the Phoenix Suns beat Minnesota, making them 23-0 all-time against the Timberwolves.

The Suns won their fifth in a row overall and extended their road winning streak to seven, one short of the team record. Phoenix has won 10 of 11 while Minnesota has lost 11 of 14.

Knicks 105, Trail Blazers 99: In New York, Patrick Ewing scored 11 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter, rallying the Knicks over Portland.

In winning its fifth straight and 13 of the last 14, New York overcame a career-high 36 points by Portland's Rod Strickland.

Ewing also had 11 rebounds and John Starks had 26 points.

Heat 107, Pacers 96: In Miami, Glen Rice sparked a key third-quarter surge before leaving the game with an injured right knee and the heat beat Indiana.

Rice scored 15 points, 10 in the third quarter, as the Heat broke away from a tie at 60 and took a 13-point lead.

Reggie Miller had 15 points. Miller, averaging nearly 20 points per game, scored 14 and 15 points in his previous two games.

Pistons 116, 76ers 105: In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Allan Houston scored a career-high 32 points and Terry Mills added 28 as the Pistons again beat Philadelphia.

The Pistons are just 12-25 this season, but four of the wins have come against the 76ers. Since Dec. 6, Detroit is 3-0 against Philadelphia and 1-18 against the rest of the NBA.

Detroit played without Grant Hill and Joe Dumars, both of whom have problem with their left heels.

Supersonics 110, Nuggets 89: In Tacoma, Washington, Shawn Kemp scored 19 points to lead the Supersonics to their 10th straight victory and their 17th home win in a row, 111-89 over Denver.

The Sonics, who haven't lost since Dec. 29, handed the Nuggets their fifth consecutive loss under interim coach Gene Littles, who replaced Dan Issel after Issel's surprise resignation Jan. 15.

Seattle ended a four-game losing streak against the Nuggets, who upset them as a No. 8 seed in the fourth round of the playoffs last May. Mahoud Abdul-Rauf led Denver with 27 points.

Rockets 115, Bucks 99: In Milwaukee, Hakeem Olajuwon scored 20 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter as the Houston Rockets snapped the Bucks' four-game winning streak.

Olajuwon even joined in Houston's 3-point barrage, hitting from the left wing with 22 seconds left for Houston's 14th 3-pointer of the night and Olajuwon's first of the season. He scored 20 of the Rockets' final 29 points.

Vernon Maxwell added 25 points, 21 after halftime, and Otis Thorpe had 15 points for Houston.

Nets 106, Warriors 93: In Oakland, California, Armon Gilliam had 26 points and matched his season high with 13 rebounds as the New Jersey Nets broke a three-game losing streak with a 106-93 win over the Warriors.

Derrick Coleman added 18 points for the Nets, who never trailed after scoring the first 10 points of the game.

Kings 110, Mavericks 109, 207: In Sacramento, California, Walt Williams connected on an off-balance shot from close range with 5.3 seconds remaining in the second overtime, giving the Kings a 110-109 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

RESULTS

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|--------------|------------|
| Detroit | 116 | Philadelphia | 105 |
| Miami | 107 | Indiana | 96 |
| New York | 105 | Portland | 99 |
| Oakland | 110 | Boston | 97 |
| San Antonio | 104 | Chicago | 102 (OT) |
| Phoenix | 100 | Minnesota | 85 |
| Houston | 115 | Milwaukee | 99 |
| Seattle | 111 | Denver | 89 |
| New Jersey | 106 | Golden State | 93 |
| Sacramento | 110 | Dallas | 109 (2 OT) |

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The British Embassy is located in Abdoun, near the Orthodox Club, Telephone 823100. The Post Office Box Number is 87.

The Consular is open from Sunday until Thursday 0830 - 1200 hours.

Delecour, Sainz lead

MONTE CARLO (R) — Defending champion Francois Delecour closed the gap on leader Carlos Sainz to 12 seconds on Wednesday to set up an exciting finale to the Monte Carlo Rally.

Frenchman Delecour, who started the third day of the season's opening event 26 seconds behind Spaniard Sainz's Subaru, gained 14 seconds in just three timed

stages from Digne to Monaco.

Ford driver Delecour took every risk on slippery roads in the mountains overlooking the principality to keep alive his chances of a second title.

Sainz, the 1991 winner, and Delecour will rest for a few hours before battling it out in the remaining six night stages including the famed Turini pass.

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| Jim Carrey in THE MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 | | Najla Fathi & Farouq Al Fihawi — in THE GARAGE Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 The movie: The Lion King will be shown at 5 p.m. every evening as well as extra shows on Fridays and Thursdays at 10:30 | | CONCORD "1" Sylvester Stallone - Sharon Stone in THE SPECIALIST Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Harrison Ford - Whitney Houston — THE BODYGUARD Shows: 3, 5, 7, 9 | | SUM'A in the satirical play HI CITIZEN Composed and directed by Mohammed Al Shawaqleh Daily from 8 p.m. Children's Play The Ninja Turtles Show Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 10:30 p.m. | Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day | Presents: The political satire: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays |

Jordan Soccer League

Wihdat await Friday's match to celebrate title win

By Aileen Bannayan

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — It is the final week of the First Division Soccer Championship, which kicks off Thursday, that will have the final say on the team that gets to win the Kingdom's most prestigious soccer title.

The 132-match, 44-week long championship will be over Friday when Al Wihdat face Al Arabi at Amman Stadium. A win or draw will automatically secure the crown for Al Wihdat. Their first round match had ended 3-1 for Al Wihdat.

Only in case of Al Arabi's win and Al Ramtha's victory over Shabab Al Hussein will the competition be prolonged for a decisive match between Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha, an unlikely prospect, but one that should be taken into account in the unpredictable world of sports.

In 1994, Al Faisali won the title in 1992 and 1993. At the other end of the standings, the last three teams have already been relegated, while the fourth will be either Al Arabi, Kufroum or Al Qadissieh.

Al Arabi seem nearer to that fate. They have a difficult match with the only unbeaten team, Al Wihdat. But even winning the match would not be of great help if Al Qadissieh and Kufroum win their match.

Al Qadissieh, who moved up from 7th to 9th three consecutive wins over Al Ramtha, Shabab Al Hussein and Al Karmel, next have an easy match against Al Jeel.

Meanwhile, Kufroum, the only newcomer this season to maintain a standing outside the last four throughout the competition, next play 11th placed Al Karmel.

Al Jazireh, a team often threatened with relegation, have finished fifth and will next play Al Ahli who secured their place in the division after their latest vital 3-1 win over Al Arabi.

Al Faisali and Al Hussein, two teams that lost the chance to compete for the title, now eye another token prize — the league's top scorer award.

Al Faisali's Jiryes Tadros said Al Hussein's Aref Hussein are now tied in first place with 16 goals each.

Tadros netted two goals from penalty kicks against Kufroum, while Hussein scored a hat-trick against Al Jazireh, leaving last week's top scorer Al Ramtha's Mouaffaq Abu Hdeib second with 14 goals.

Kufroum's Yusef Obeidat who led the scorers in the first round is now third, tied with 13 goals with Al Ahli's Nari Yada.

Al Arabi's Ayman Al Omari is fourth with 12 goals. Al Wihdat's Jihad Abdul Munem is a distant fifth with 9 goals.

Al Hussein are the top scoring team of the com-

petition with 52 goals in 21 matches they have the highest scoring average of 2.4 per match.

Al Hussein, who secured at least one of the season's titles when they won the Federation Shield, also have the best result record with 14 wins, two draws and five losses.

Although leaders Al Wihdat maintained an unbeaten record so far, their scoring is low at 27 goals and an average of 1.2 per match.

Al Jeel have the worst scoring record. They only scored one win and have only netted 11 goals while allowing 58 to enter their net.

Schedule of final week:

Thursday 26/1

Jeel/Qadissieh 2:30 p.m.

Petra Stadium

Kufroum/Karmel 2:30 p.m.

Hassan Stadium

Jazireh/Ahli 2:30 p.m.

Amman Stadium

Friday 27/1

Wihdat/Arabi 2:30 p.m.

Amman Stadium

Shabab Al Hussein/Ramtha 2:30

Petra Stadium

Hussein/Faisali 2:30 p.m.

Hassan Stadium.

Standings after 21st week

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts. |
|-------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|------|
| Wihdat | 21 | 13 | 8 | — | 27 | 5 | 34 |
| Ramtha | 21 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 42 | 13 | 32 |
| Faisali | 21 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 41 | 9 | 31 |
| Hussein | 21 | 14 | 2 | 5 | 52 | 24 | 30 |
| Jazireh | 21 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 30 | 22 | 25 |
| Ahli | 21 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 29 | 28 | 22 |
| Qadissieh | 21 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 26 | 25 | 20 |
| Kufroum | 21 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 28 | 34 | 20 |
| Arabi | 21 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 26 | 33 | 19 |
| Shabab Al Hussein | 21 | 2 | 4 | 15 | 20 | 45 | 8 |
| Karmel | 21 | 2 | 4 | 15 | 14 | 50 | 8 |
| Jeel | 21 | 1 | 1 | 19 | 11 | 58 | 3 |

Round One to Kiwis ... but there's a long way to go

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — A day after the first round of America's Cup trials ended, Peter Blake tried to put the results in the proper context. "We are happy to be 6-0," said the head of the potent Team New Zealand challenge.

"But this is round one. Now we must guard against being 6-18."

The point being that last week's racing off the storm-whipped Southern California coast is but the first of four preliminary rounds — before the challenger and defender semi-finals.

But the first round offered some insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the competing teams. A synopsis in order of first-round standings:

Challengers

*Team New Zealand (6-0) — Team also got off to a fast start in '86 and '92 but lost in challenger final. Skipper Russell Coutts apparently has an excellent crew. Will they self-destruct again?

*NZL-39 (5-1) Chris Dickson's crew had almost no pre-trials training, but improved rapidly during first round.

*Nippon (4-2) — Highly modified JPN-30 was big improvement over what was in World's. Very focused crew determined to make it work for skipper Makoto Namba.

*One Australia (3-3) — After dominating last November's World Championships, John Bertrand's Aussies slipped off the pace. Why? Boat could have been sailing with new experimental keel design.

*Sydney 95 (2-4) — After getting off to fast start with two wins in first three days, team stumbled late and withdrew from last race.

*France 2 (1-5) — World Match Racing champion Bertrand Pave gave the French excellent start. But the boat, which fell from its cradle and was nearly destroyed seven weeks ago, was not up to the competition.

*Rioja de Espana (0-6) — Like NZL-39, the Spanish had almost no pre-trials training.

Defenders

*Young America (5-1) — Excellent start considering boat was nearly destroyed in gale-force winds on January 4. Despite being newcomers to the game, skipper Kevin Mahaney and crew performed capably in baptism.

Bruce Nelson has designed boat with good speed in wide range of wind and sea conditions.

*Stars and Stripes (3-3) — Interesting that Dennis Conner stepped up and convincingly beat Young America on last day to keep PACT '95 from finishing first round undefeated. Conner's team over plays all its cards in round one. Conner turning over helm at times to Paul Cayard bodes well.

*America3 (1-5) — After beating Conner in historic first race, the first all-women crew lost five straight. Was Conner sandbagging? Of course, America3 is the only 1992 boat still campaigning and a new boat will arrive for fourth round.

*The second round of the trials begins Sunday, January 29. Wins in the second round are worth two points apiece, double their first-round value.

*The French will definitely sail their new boat — which will be remodeled on January 25 — in the second round, while One Australia is expected to sail its new boat.

Evert named to Tennis Hall of Fame

NEWPORT, Rhode Island (AFP) — Chris Evert, whose 157 career tennis titles include 18 Grand Slams, will be the only player inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame this year, officials said Tuesday.

Evert will be enshrined on July 16, becoming the 163rd player to be so honored.

Evert, who cemented her arrival on the international scene when she was 15 with a victory over then world number one Margaret Court at a tournament in North Carolina, held the number one ranking eight times during her career.

He metronomic groundstrokes and controlled demeanor on court earned her the nickname "Ice Maiden."

At the same time, her ponytail and shy smile gave her an image as one of America's sporting sweethearts.

Evert said her baseline game, now the standard for young women players — was a novelty she introduced.

"No one could hit three straight groundstrokes without hitting one into the net or out of the court," Evert's game was perfectly suited to clay, and her 125-match winning streak on clay is the best record of any player for any single surface.

Her career was also marked by a long rivalry with Czech-born American Martina Navratilova. Her 157 career titles is second only to Navratilova's career total of 167.

Evert will become the 163rd player enshrined in the Hall of Fame and the 44th woman. She is the sixth person to be elected unanimously since 1980.

England's Virginia Wade, another Hall of Fame player, summed up Evert's career by saying: "She came in a winner and stayed that way."

Salt Lake City heads finalists in 2002 Winter Games race

LAUSANNE (AP) — The race for the 2002 Winter Olympics will be between front-runner Salt Lake City and challengers from Canada, Sweden and Switzerland.

As expected, Salt Lake City was one of the four finalists selected Tuesday by the International Olympic Committee pared down the field of nine candidate host cities.

The three other finalists are Ostersund, Sweden; Quebec, and Sion, Switzerland.

Eliminated from the race were Graz, Austria; Jaca, Spain; Poprad-Tatry, Slovakia; Sochi, Russia; and Tarvisio, Italy.

The four finalists now have five months to pursue their campaigns before the entire IOC elects the host city on June 16 at its session in Budapest, Hungary.

Tuesday's decision means there will be two candidates from North America and two from Europe in the final round.

There were no surprises in the consensus decision by the IOC's 10-man selection committee, which was announced in a crowded hall of the Olympic Museum by IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch.

The result reflected the findings of last month's IOC evaluation report, which rated Salt Lake City, Ostersund, Quebec and Sion way above the other five on technical merit.

"The four best were the four selected," Samaranch said. "The surprise would have been had there been a surprise," said IOC executive board member Richard Pund of Canada. "It's reassuring a selection college would come to the conclusion that it did."

Although the decision was predictable, it was highly satisfying for Salt Lake City, which was narrowly defeated by Nagano, Japan, four years ago in the vote for the 1998 Games.

"It felt great to hear our name read out," said Salt Lake bid chief Tom Welch. "We sat through one of these before when our name wasn't read out. I would very much like to hear it read out one

more time (on June 16)."

Salt Lake City, which is bidding for the fourth time in 30 years, has been the established favorite throughout the current campaign. If successful, the city would bring the Winter Olympics to the United States for the first time since Lake Placid, N.Y., in 1980.

Salt Lake's strong position is acknowledged by its rivals. "From the Quebec perspective, you have to focus on Salt Lake as the one to beat," Pund said. "If I were the strategist, that's who I would aim at first."

But Welch said the race starts now from scratch on equal footing.

"It's like an athlete who's just been through the qualifying trials to run in the Olympic Games," he said. "The caliber of the competition will only intensify between now and June. We are approaching a new starting line. As of today, we all line up at the starting line to run the dash."

Welch said Salt Lake city will not focus on its front-runner status.

"I don't think it's an issue," he said. "We will run the race to win. We are not deviating from our path to look to the side or look over our shoulder. We're right where we want to be, right where we need to be."

The next — and possibly crucial — stage of the bidding process will be the visits by IOC members to the four finalist cities. Welch said the members should be impressed by the facilities and projects which have been completed since the last bid.

"Between now and June 16, we will work as hard as we can to win the trust of the IOC members," Welch said. "If we do that, we should be able to win. Somebody may beat us, but they won't outwork us."

Quebec is adopting a similar approach. "We'll strictly be looking at what we do best," said Quebec mayor Jean-Paul L'Allier. "It's like downhill skiing. If I turn my head around to look at the other fellow, I'm losing half a second and that's too much."

Quebec and Salt Lake City will be direct rivals since the

IOC members will likely choose only one North American city to go into the final round of balloting against one European candidate.

Sion, perceived as the weakest of the four finalists on paper, said it should not be ruled out.

"We are determined," said bid chairman and Sion Mayor Gilbert Debons. "We are competent and we have the heart and spirit to win the race. Sion has a long tradition of winter sports and a long experience in organizing them."

Ostersund is making its third bid and the sixth overall from Sweden.

"The type of games we can offer would be along the lines of Lillehammer, a Nordic, intimate atmosphere with everything close together," said bid chief Christer Persson. "Salt Lake City is also an excellent candidate and in the end it will come down to a question of taste."

While Tuesday's decision was based strictly on technical matters, the vote in June will take into account the less predictable personal preferences of the 96 IOC members.

This was the first time the IOC cut the field of bidding cities before the final vote. The move was intended to weed out weak candidates and to reduce the costs of the bidding process.

Not everyone was happy with the new systems, especially proponents of the Sochi bid from Russia.

"The experiment has to be improved in the future," said Alexander Kozlovsky, vice-president of the Russian Olympic Committee. "They chose cities with developed infrastructure. For Sochi, this is an unfair approach. We want to build something absolutely new. I believe they have to be more open-minded in the future, less blind-folded."

2002 Winter Olympics finalists

A brief look at the four finalists in the bidding for the 2002 Winter Olympics:

Salt Lake City

Regional population: 1,866,000.

Projected cost of the games: \$798 million.

Main advantages: Most venues ready; single Olympic village; established ski resorts; good highways and access; plenty of hotels; sound financial plan; single good revenue possibilities.

Quebec

Population: 6,700,000.

Cost of games: \$567 million.

Main advantages: Excellent indoor facilities; good environmental protection plan; single Olympic village, government financial guarantees.

Ostersund, Sweden

Population: 60,000.

Cost of games: \$780 million.

Main advantages: Single lakeside Olympic village; well planned transport system; good media facilities; good financial plan.

Sion, Switzerland

Population 262,000.

Cost of games: \$472 million.

Main advantages: Experience in organizing winter sports events; public support (61 per cent approval in referendum); World Cup standard Alpine ski sites; Swiss efficiency; use of existing sites.

Olympics making final plans for ticket sales

ATLANTA (AP) — To buy tickets to the Atlanta Olympics, the line forms to the rear of the crowd of VIPs already placing orders.

While Olympic organizers make the final preparations to put tickets on sale to the public May 1, they also are busy handling requests from the sponsors, hotels, sports officials and selected tour groups that get first dibs.

Though these groups may snap up nearly 1 million of the choicest seats, organizers insist regular folks shouldn't worry — there still will be a record number of tickets available.

And with the Atlanta organizers counting on strong ticket sales to meet the

budget of the privately financed 1994 Summer Games, an all-out effort to sell those tickets is guaranteed.

"Nothing ever sells itself. What you need to do in any marketing programme where you have a high-demand product is let the people know how easy it is to purchase," said Scott Anderson, the top ticket official at the Atlanta Committee for the Olympics are difficult to get," said Anderson, ACOG's managing director for games services. "That's the perception we are fighting... our answer is, tickets are not going to be difficult to get."

But it clearly will be more difficult to attend the glamour events — opening ceremonies or gymnastics finals, for example — because demand is expected to be tremendous.

ACOG is ironing out the last details of putting about 10 million tickets on sale to the public.

A ticket vendor has been selected and will be announced later this month. A brochure has been designed, though decisions on how many to print and how to distribute it still must be made.

In an attempt to ensure fairness, tickets ordered in the first 60 days of the public sale will be thrown into a pool, from which they will be processed in random order. After that, it's first come, first served.

Though the tickets go on sale more than a year before the games, they must be paid for in advance. VISA, checks and money orders will be accepted.

In the fall, applicants will receive a letter notifying them what they're getting. The tickets will be delivered in spring 1996. The games begin July 19, 1996.

They include 194 National Olympic Committees, the groups that send teams to the games; corporate sponsors who have paid millions of dollars to finance the games; hotels that have joined an Olympic network and will be able to resell the tickets with room packages. Atlanta Braves season ticket holders, Olympic product licensees.

Brundle confirmed at Ligier

LONDON (R) — The French Ligier Formula One motor racing team confirmed Wednesday that Briton Martin Brundle and Japanese driver Aguri Suzuki will partner Frenchman Olivier Panis this season.

The deal with Brundle indicates that former world champion Nigel Mansell will now almost certainly race for the Marlboro McLaren Mercedes Team.

Brundle, who was fighting with Mansell for the second seat alongside Mika Hakkinen, had hoped to stay with McLaren for a second year but grew impatient of waiting for the outcome of negotiations.

The news also means that Johnny Herbert looks set for a drive alongside world champion Michael Schumacher at the Benetton Renault Team.

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Jordan, Israel review draft bilateral accords

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel have drawn up a draft agreement on trade after several weeks of negotiations and the draft is expected to be presented to the two governments soon for ratification after a few more modifications, officials said Wednesday.

Work on the accord was speeded up after a visit Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin paid to Amman on Jan. 12 and agreed with His Majesty King Hussein to accelerate the implementation of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty signed on Oct. 26.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the Jordanian-Israeli committee charged with implementing the treaty met Wednesday in the Israeli port city of Eilat "to review the outcome of negotiations conducted by specialised joint committees last week and to set an agenda for the committee's next meeting."

The committee in charge of implementing the treaty is co-chaired by Hani Al Mulgi, president of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), and Eliakim Rubinstein, who also led the Israeli team to the bilateral negotiations with Jordan.

Petra quoted an official spokesman as saying that the committee discussed the "main articles in the draft agreements being negotiated under the terms of the peace treaty" and that Jordan "reasserted the need to have the draft accord cover all sectoral questions in a comprehensive and clearly defined manner."

The committee will meet again at Deir Allah, on the Jordanian side of the Jordan Valley, on Wednesday.

The Jordanian team to the meeting included Major General Tahsin Shubrum, assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Khalil Kreizat, secretary-general of the Ministry of Interior, Mohammad Smadi, secretary-general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and Basam Awadallah, an advisor at the Prime Ministry.

The peace treaty calls for a trade agreement to be finalised in six months after the ratification of the treaty itself, the deadline is May 10 (after the treaty was ratified on Nov. 10). But Mr. Rabin said on Jan. 12 that both sides wanted to accelerate the process and Israel would allow Jordanian exports to the Jewish state earlier than that date.

Israeli officials said early this week that both sides were working to conclude the trade accord on Jan. 25, but that it was unlikely to be completed by this date.

According to a report in the Jerusalem Post, Jordan and Israel have agreed to remove all important restrictions "under the principle of

non-discrimination" and to grant each other preferential treatment in terms of lower customs duties for a limited list of imports.

Israel has also agreed to give Jordanian products more benefit of preferential treatment with lower duties, it said.

Zohar Peri, a senior official of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Trade, was quoted as saying by the Post that he expected the negotiations on rules of origin on Jordanian products to be "complicated."

"Israel is demanding that 40 per cent of the value of goods imported from Jordan derive from local work and products," said the Post. "Without such requirements, non-Jordanian products could come into (Israel) under the preferential terms that are only intended for the Kingdom."

With a view to encouraging industrial cooperation between the two countries and to help Jordan meet the minimal "local-content" requirements, Israel proposes to recognise Israeli components of Jordanian products as of Jordanian origin, according to the newspaper.

Israel is seeking Jordanian preferential treatment to consumer products, including food, refrigerators and air-conditioners, and is also requesting to include equipment and industrial goods such as stone-cutting machinery, printed circuits and telecommunications equipment in the preferential list of imports.

According to Mr. Peri, Israel is also seeking identical treatment for goods that both sides produce such as phosphate and cement.

Meanwhile, the Post reported on Wednesday that aviation talks between Jordan and Israel were deadlocked over the altitude that Jordanian planes should fly at while using Israeli airspace.

The Post quoted Eli Danon, a spokesman of the Israeli Transport Ministry, as saying that other issues involved in the negotiations on an agreement on transport between Jordan and Israel were going well and were expected to be completed on Wednesday. There was no specific Jordanian comment on the issue.

According to Mr. Danon, Jordan is insisting that planes using Israeli airspace to fly to Jordan be permitted to fly at a height of 11,000 feet while Israel was objecting to this saying it would interfere with air force training flights. Israel wants a higher altitude.

"As a result of the disagreement, Israel said it was willing to defer aviation talks and a subsequent aviation agreement," said the Post.

Jordan is reportedly willing to keep this particular issue in abeyance while continuing talks on the joint use by Israel and Jordan of the Aqaba airfield.

Amnesty denounces French role over Sudan

NAIROBI (AFP) — Watchdog organisation Amnesty International on Wednesday accused France of deliberately playing down serious human rights violations in Sudan because of its own political interests.

Presenting a damning report on major abuses in Sudan, Amnesty representative Andrew Mawson said France provided the "clearest example of those breaking international ranks" on condemning human rights violations in the country.

Mr. Mawson, who led the investigation behind the report, said that Amnesty nevertheless had no independent confirmation of charges that France has helped the military junta in Khartoum to fight rebels in southern Sudan in exchange for the extradition of "Carlos."

Carlos, whose real name is Illich Ramirez Sanchez, was arrested in Sudan last August and banded over to France for trial.

The rapporteur mentioned no other countries by name, but said France was among those which had sought to improve relations with Khartoum, where General Omar Al Beshir's junta, backed by Islamic fundamentalists, seized power in a June 1989

coup. The Amnesty report said "some governments have begun to play down the seriousness of the human rights situation in pursuit of their own political interests."

In the 132-page document, whose publication marks the start of a campaign to improve conditions in Sudan, Amnesty said human rights abuses are being committed on a massive scale in Sudan both by the government and by the rebels.

The London-based organisation called on the United Nations set up an "international civilian human rights monitoring team" to tackle abuses in the country.

"Since coming to power, the Sudanese government has made torture and the detention of suspected opponents in so-called 'ghost-houses' — the security forces' secret detention centres — standard practice throughout the country as it crushes political opposition and attempts to

mould society to its own version of a radical Islamic agenda," Amnesty's report said. Since 1983, when civil war reignited in the south after a lull of several years, more than one million people have died in the conflict between the Arab and Muslim north,

Arafat in Amman

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker greets Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat upon the latter's arrival in Amman on Wednesday. His Majesty King Hussein met with Mr. Arafat later in the day (see page one) (AFP photo)



NEWS IN BRIEF

Police break up protest for freedom in Aden

ADEN (AFP) — Yemeni police broke up a protest for press freedom in the southern port city of Aden on Wednesday, making a number of arrests, witnesses said. Journalists and opposition activists gathered in the city centre, holding banners calling for press freedom and respect for democracy, before police used "violence" against them, the witnesses told AFP. The demonstration was called by a collective set up after the Jan. 4 suspension of the independent daily Al Ayyam, published in Aden, which is close to the liberal opposition. The demonstrators drew up a petition to President Ali Abdullah Saleh demanding the release of those arrested, press freedom and lifting of the suspension of Al Ayyam, said Abdul Aziz Al Saqqaf, chief editor of the English-language weekly Yemen Times and head of the collective. The petition said Al Ayyam was suspended after it revealed "human rights violations, especially in southern Yemen, since the (civil) war ended."

Detained Lebanon MP suffers heart attack

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese Member of Parliament (MP) Yahya Shamas, under arrest on drugs dealing charges, was taken to hospital after suffering a heart attack, judicial sources said on Wednesday. They said Mr. Shamas, who was stripped of his parliamentary immunity and arrested on Nov. 30, was taken on Tuesday night from his cell at Roumeh jail east of Beirut to a private hospital. He is in his late 40s or early 50s. Mr. Shamas, a Shiite Muslim from the eastern Bekaa Valley which was a centre of the multimillion-dollar narcotics industry during the 1975-90 civil war, has denied involvement in drugs dealing. He touched off a scandal by telling parliament that President Elias Hrawi's son, unnamed deputies, and unnamed minister, a well-known businessman and 10 airline pilots were linked to the drugs trade. Lebanon's prosecutor-general, Munif Quidat, said there was no truth to Mr. Shamas' allegations. Lebanese authorities have begun a campaign against cultivation, processing and trafficking of narcotics over the past two years. The brother of another MP is also under arrest on narcotics dealing charges.

Tripoli women protest French headscarf ban

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Four hundred women demonstrated Wednesday outside the French cultural centre in Tripoli, northern Lebanon, over France's ban on the wearing of Islamic headscarves. The women, all students, carried banners saying "the veil is a protection for women" and "the veil will stay whatever happens." They handed a statement to the centre's director, Jean-Luc Ferro, protesting at the French decision in September to ban Islamic headscarves from schools. The statement was signed by the Muslim Women Students' Association, a body linked to the Sunni Muslim fundamentalist group Al Gamaa Islamiyah. In December about 100 women close to the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah movement held a similar demonstration outside the French cultural centre in Beirut.

Six dead, seven missing in Egyptian rubble

CAIRO (AP) — Rescuers recovered the bodies of six labourers on Wednesday from the rubble of a university building that collapsed in southern Egypt. Seven others were still missing, police said, and six were hospitalised with injuries. The workers had been trying to repair the structure of the building, which is part of the medical school at El-Minya University, when it collapsed Tuesday night, police said. The cause was not immediately known. But students were ordered to vacate the building months ago after university officials determined that it was dangerous. The university is in the town of Al Minya, 220 kilometres south of Cairo.

Norway may permanently recall Iran envoy

OSLO (AFP) — The Norwegian foreign ministry may recall its ambassador to Iran permanently and replace him with a chargé d'affaires in connection with the Salman Rushdie affair, the Norwegian daily Arbeiderbladet reported Wednesday. Mr. Gavahi had hinted in a letter to the Norwegian foreign ministry that his government could change its policy on an Iranian death threat against British author Salman Rushdie and all those involved in the publication of "The Satanic Verses." The late founder of the Islamic republic Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini condemned Mr. Rushdie to death in 1989 in a "fatwa" or religious edict, saying his novel had insulted Islam. Mr. Gavahi also said that the fatwa would not affect Norwegians living in Norway, but the Iranian authorities recently withdrew the letter and asked its ambassador, viewed as a moderate, to leave Norway.

Sudan to take border dispute to World Court

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan says it will take its border dispute with Egypt to the World Court if bilateral negotiations fail to resolve it. Omar Youssif Berido, undersecretary at the Foreign Ministry, told reporters Tuesday night that the dispute over the area known as Halaib could be resolved with Egypt "if political willpower prevailed." Otherwise, he warned, Sudan will appeal to the World Court in the Hague. Egypt opposes any action that would broaden the dispute beyond bilateral negotiations. Relations between the Egyptian government and Sudan have been rocky since Sudanese leader Omar Al Bashir came to power five years ago and installed an Islamic regime. They worsened during the 1990-91 Gulf conflict, when Sudan supported Iraq out of Kuwait. Egypt also has accused Sudan of supporting Islamic militants who have waged a three-year campaign of violence against Egypt's secular government.

Japanese crown prince, princess begin three-day visit to Jordan today

AMMAN — Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako arrive here today (Thursday) on the first visit by a member of the Japanese Imperial family to Jordan since 1976.

Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako will arrive from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the third leg of a visit which began in Kuwait. It is the second tour of the Middle East by the crown prince and princess.

Jordanian and Japanese officials have described the visit to Jordan by Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako as a reflection of the excellent state of relations between the Kingdom and Japan.

During their visit, which comes in response to an invitation by Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, the Japanese Royal couple will tour sites of archaeological and tourist interest.

Emperor Akihito, who was then crown prince of Japan, visited Jordan in 1976.

Jordan and Japan maintain traditionally strong relations and the King and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan have visited Japan several times.

Japan and Jordan established diplomatic relations in 1964 and opened embassies

in each other's capital in 1974.

Japanese Ambassador Yoji Ikeda described the visit as a reaffirmation of the strong ties binding the royal families of Japan and Jordan and the people of the two countries.

Mr. Ikeda noted that the King had visited Japan at least four times and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan three times.

"It is highly expected that the coming visit of Their Imperial Highnesses Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako will enhance further the existing close and friendly relations" between Jordan and Japan, he said.

Crown Prince Hassan is tentatively scheduled to pay a visit to Japan in late May 1995 to inaugurate a "Jordan Week" in Tokyo. "Jordan Week" is also expected to witness the launch of Royal Jordanian flights between Amman and new Kansai airport in Japan. Definite confirmation of the Crown Prince's visit to Japan and the launch of RJ flights was not immediately available, however.

The schedule of the Japanese royal couple here includes a dinner hosted by Crown Prince Hassan and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath on Thursday, a visit

to the royal tombs and the Martyrs Monument Friday morning, a visit to Petra and Aqaba overnight Friday, return to Amman after lunch at the Jordan Valley on Saturday, a banquet hosted by the King and Queen in Amman Saturday night, meetings with the Japanese community in Amman and members of the Japan-Jordan association and a visit to a workshop of the Young Women's Muslim Association.

Princess Masako will also visit the Jordan Red Crescent Society.

The Japanese Crown Prince and Princess leave Amman Sunday evening.

In Dubai on Wednesday, Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako met Dubai's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who expressed condolences over last week's earthquake in Japan, the Emirates News Agency said.

It said the royal couple exchanged gifts with Sheikh Mohammed, also the UAE defence minister, and both sides expressed hope for stronger ties.

The UAE supplies Japan with most of its crude oil needs.

The royal couple on Tuesday watched a camel race and traditional dancing in the UAE.

Kobe gets some relief amid aftershocks and political fallout

KOBE (Agencies) — The first hot bath since last week's earthquake brought some relief Wednesday to thousands packed into emergency shelters as officials appealed for medicine to combat an outbreak of influenza among the homeless.

A strong aftershock from the Jan. 17 quake, which killed more than 5,000 people, rocked this city late Wednesday. There were no reports of damage or casualties.

Officials said "Bullet" trains between Kyoto and Osaka stations were halted and police closed several expressways in the area as a precaution. Eight days after the magni-

tude 7.2 quake, about one-fifth of Kobe's population — 307,000 people — remain in tents and makeshift shelters set up in schools and government buildings.

In an effort to ease the misery, Japanese troops erected several temporary public baths around the city, giving thousands of people their first opportunity to bathe since the quake.

As of Wednesday, the death toll from the quake stood at 5,074 with 61 missing and 26,618 injured. Nearly 75,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed.

Authorities condemned 1,268 quake-damaged buildings and began demolishing some of them with the help of

Japanese troops.

Shock waves from the earthquake have spread to all parts of Japanese society raising questions about the future of the nation's ruling structure and the survival of Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama's government.

One week after the disaster, Mr. Murayama, Japan's military, Tokyo's all-powerful bureaucrats, business practices and the very laws of the nation have come under a relentless microscope.

The judgements have been overwhelmingly that something went wrong in handling the country's worst natural disaster for nearly half a century.

Russia tightens Grozny siege

GROZNY (Agencies) — Russian forces pounded the Chechen capital Grozny with artillery shells and tank fire on Wednesday and independent fighters said they expected a major Russian ground assault to clear the city.

Russian troops attacked Chechen positions, particularly in the city's southern suburbs, with artillery, missiles and machine gunfire in a barrage that ended five days of relative calm.

"There is serious shelling and tank fire now. We are expecting a big Russian attack soon with tanks and troops to clear us out," said a 34-year-old Chechen fighter Revan Albiyev returning from fighting in the Minutka district of the city.

"Each one of us can take out at least one tank. Even if we have to throw ourselves under the tracks. Now we are in a holy war," he declared.

In Moscow, Russia's powerful security council, meeting under the chairmanship of President Boris Yeltsin, approved a move to

switch control of the Chechnya campaign from the regular army to Interior Ministry.

But given the scale of fighting the formal move appeared unlikely to change the reality on the ground, with the army remaining the dominant Russian force.

The switch of emphasis would support Mr. Yeltsin's comments that military operations in Chechnya were effectively over and might help smooth relations with Western governments which have been upset by the heavy-handed use of the army in Chechnya.

The army has been attacked at home and abroad for its indiscriminate bombing and shelling since it moved into Chechnya on December 11 to crush the mainly-Muslim republic's three-year secession from Russia.

The Interior Ministry forces have been charged with mopping up the remaining Chechen resistance in towns and villages, and with reestablishing the economy

and civilian administration of the war-devastated country.

Also on the council's agenda were plans to rebuild the devastated Chechen economy.

A total withdrawal of the Chechen independence fighters from Grozny appeared close at hand Wednesday and a press photographer spotted Chechen artillery pieces being taken out of the city on Tuesday night.

Also Tuesday, the Russian forces had cut off the last supply route to the rebels and surrounded Minutka Square in the southern part of the city where the Chechen forces have established their headquarters.

Rebel leaders have already said they are planning a retreat to the mountains of the south.

Earlier this week, Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev vowed that his rebels would continue fighting Russia until a ceasefire accord was reached and international observers were deploying in Chechnya.

COLUMN

Major wants to ease Sunday drinking rules

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major said Tuesday he would like to do away with "old-fashioned" rules limiting the sale of alcohol on Sundays. Major said he was in favour of letting public houses stay open all day on Sunday instead of forcing them to shut between 03:00 p.m. and 07:00 p.m. as they now have to do. He also said shops should be allowed to sell liquor all day from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. "The present law on sales of liquor on Sunday is absurd. Why can people buy liquor in a shop at noon but not at 11:30 a.m. or in a pub at 03:00 p.m. but not 04:00 p.m.?" he asked.

Ireland on top in making babies, Swedes surging

PARIS (AFP) — Ireland is still on top in the European baby-making stakes, although the Swedes have put on a spurt and risk beating them next year, according to a report published here Tuesday. The average Irish couple produces just over two children, maintaining the island's position as most fertile in Europe, while countries like Denmark, Luxembourg, and Britain come in between 1.7-1.8 babies per couple. At the bottom end of the fecundity range, Italian, German and Spanish parents produce only an average of 1.3 children. France is sandwiched between them on 1.65. The real stars are the Swedes, however, who have surged from 1.6 a decade ago to within a hair's breadth of Ireland's two and a bit. They beat them once off in 1992 and could yet top the chart next year.

Dinner with Newt, at \$50,000 a plate

WASHINGTON (R) — House of Representatives speaker Newt Gingrich Tuesday defended a \$50,000-a-plate fund-raising dinner that he will attend to raise money for a conservative cable television network. The Republican leaders told reporters that National Empowerment Television, on which he hosts a show, asked him for help and he accepted because "I believe in it as a cause."

Pope: Films must turn against 'negative behaviour'

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Recognising the vast reach of the cinema, Pope John Paul II urged filmmakers to resist being a "mirror for negative behaviour" such as hatred and sexual violence. The Pontiff also urged the public to avoid "the dangerous power of conditioning" from film. "The cinema, while having the power and great merit to contribute to the growth of culture and the individual, can also ... be used as a mirror for negative behaviour with scenes of violence and sex that offend the dignity of the person," said the Pope in a message in advance of a May 28 worldwide celebration marking 100 years of motion pictures. The Pontiff, who was a stage actor as a young man in Poland, appealed to parents to take a closer role in deciding the types of programmes watched by their children.

N. Carolina executes cheerleader killer

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — A man was put to death Tuesday for raping and killing a cheerleader, becoming the second white person executed for killing a black person since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976. Kermit Smith Jr. was pronounced dead at 2:12 a.m. (0712 GMT) after a last meal of four pieces of Kentucky fried chicken, a mountain dew and a Pepsi, said correction department spokeswoman Patty McQuillan. Smith was the 260th person to be executed since the 1976 U.S. supreme court decision allowing states to resume using the death penalty. The only other white person executed for killing a black person since 1976 was Donald Gaskin, who was put to death in 1991 in South Carolina for killing a fellow prisoner.